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ROMANCE

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This touching little sketch is from the French of Victor Hugo; the translation is that of *The Strand Magazine*. A great English poet once wrote a sonnet to show that it is only the poor who are pitiful to the poor. The great French poet evidently holds the same opinion.

JENNY.

I.

It was night. The cabin, poor, but warm and cosy, was full of a half twilight, through which the objects of the interior were but dimly visible by the glimmer of the embers which flickered on the hearth and reddened the dark rafters overhead. The fisherman's nets were hanging on the wall. Some homely pots and pans twinkled on a rough shelf in the corner. Beside a great bed with long, falling curtains, a mattress was extended on a couple of old benches, on which five little children were asleep like cherubs in a nest. By the bedside, with her forehead pressed against the counterpane, knelt the children's mother. She was alone. Outside the cabin the black ocean, dashed with stormy snow-flakes, moaned and murmured, and her husband was at sea. From his boyhood he had been a fisherman. His life, as one may say, had been a daily fight with the great waters; for every day the children must be fed, and every day, rain, wind, or tempest, out went his boat to fish. And while, in his four-sailed boat, he plied his solitary task at sea, his wife at home patched the old sails, mended the nets, looked to the hooks, or watched the little fire where the fish-soup was boiling. As soon as the five children were asleep, she fell upon her knees and prayed to Heaven for her husband in his struggle with the waves and darkness. And truly such a life as his was hard. The likeliest place for fish was a mere speck among the breakers, not more than twice as large as his own cabin—a spot obscure, capricious, changing on the moving desert, and yet which had to be discov-

ered, in the fog and tempest of a winter night, by sheer skill and knowledge of the tides and winds. And there —while the gliding waves ran past like emerald serpents, and the gulf of darkness rolled and tossed, and the straining rigging groaned as if in terror—there, amidst the icy seas, he thought of his own Jenny; and Jenny, in her cottage, thought of him with tears.

She was thinking of him then and praying. The sea-gull's harsh and mocking cry distressed her, and the roaring of the billows on the reef alarmed her soul. But she was wrapped in thoughts—thoughts of their poverty. Their little children went barefooted winter and summer. Wheat bread they never ate; only bread of barley. Heavens! the wind roared like the bellows of a forge, and the sea-coast echoed like an anvil. She wept and trembled. Poor wives whose husbands are at sea! How terrible to say, "My dear ones—father, lover, brothers, sons—are in the tempest!" But Jenny was still more unhappy. Her husband was alone—alone without assistance on this bitter night. Her children were too little to assist him. Poor mother! Now she says, "I wish they were grown up to help their father!" Foolish dream! In years to come, when they are with their father in the tempest, she will say with tears, "I wish they were but children still!"

II.

Jenny took her lantern and her cloak. "It is time," she said to herself, "to see whether he is coming back, whether the sea is calmer, and whether the light is burning on the signal-mast." She went out. There was nothing to be seen—barely a streak of white on the horizon. It was raining, the dark, cold rain of early morning. No cabin window showed a gleam of light.

All at once, while peering round her, her eyes perceived a tumble-down old cabin which showed no sign of light or fire. The door was swinging in the wind; the worm-eaten walls seemed scarcely able to support the crazy roof, on which the wind shook the yellow, filthy tufts of rotten thatch.

"Stay," she cried, "I am forgetting the poor widow whom my husband found the other day alone and ill. I must see how she is getting on."

She knocked at the door and listened. No one answered. Jenny shivered in the cold sea-wind.

"She is ill. And her poor children! She has only two of them; but she is very poor, and has no husband."

She knocked again, and called out, "Hey, neighbor!" But the cabin was still silent.

"Heaven!" she said, "how sound she sleeps, that it requires so much to wake her!"

At the instant the door opened of itself. She entered. Her lantern illumined the interior of the dark and silent cabin, and showed her the water falling from the ceiling as through the openings of a sieve. At the end of the room an awful form was lying: a woman stretched out motionless, with bare feet and sightless eyes. Her cold white arm hung down among the straw of the pallet. She was dead. Once a strong and happy mother, she was now only the spectre which remains of poor humanity, after a long struggle with the world.

Near the bed on which the mother lay, two little children—a boy and a girl—slept together in their cradle, and were smiling in their dreams. Their mother, when she felt that she was dying, had laid her cloak across their feet and wrapped them in her dress, to keep them warm when she herself was cold.

How sound they slept in their old, tottering cradle, with their calm breath and quiet little faces! It seemed as if nothing could awake these sleeping orphans. Outside the rain beat down in floods, and the sea gave forth a sound like an alarm-bell. From the old creviced roof, through which blew the gale, a drop of water fell on the dead face, and ran down it like a tear.

III.

What had Jenny been about in the dead woman's house? What was she carrying off beneath her cloak? Why was her heart beating? Why did she hasten with such trembling steps to her own cabin, without daring

to look back? What did she hide in her own bed, behind the curtain? What had she been stealing?

When she entered the cabin, the cliffs were growing white. She sank upon the chair beside the bed. She was very pale; it seemed as if she felt repentance. Her forehead fell upon the pillow, and at intervals, with broken words, she murmured to herself, while outside the cabin moaned the savage sea.

"My poor man! Oh, heavens, what will he say? He has already so much trouble. What have I done now? Five children on our hands already! Their father toils and toils, and yet, as if he had not care enough already, I must give him this care more. Is that he? No, nothing. I have done wrong—he would do quite right to beat me. Is that he? No! So much the better! The door moves as if some one were coming in; but no. To think that I should feel afraid to see him enter!"

Then she remained absorbed in thought, and shivering with the cold, unconscious of all outward sounds, of the black cormorants, which passed shrieking, and of the rage of wind and sea.

All at once the door flew open, a streak of the white light of morning entered, and the fisherman, dragging his dripping net, appeared upon the threshold, and cried, with a gay laugh, "Here comes the Navy!"

"You!" cried Jenny; and she clasped her husband like a lover, and pressed her mouth against his rough jacket.

"Here I am, wife," he said, showing in the firelight the good-natured and contented face which Jenny loved so well.

"I have been unlucky," he continued.

"What kind of weather have you had?"

"Dreadful!"

"And the fishing?"

"Bad. But never mind. I have you in my arms again, and I am satisfied. I have caught nothing at all. I have only torn my net. The deuce was in the wind to-night. At one moment of the tempest I thought the boat was foundering, and the cable broke. But what have you been doing all this time?"

Jenny felt a shiver in the darkness.

"I?" she said, in trouble. "Oh, nothing; just as usual. I have been sewing. I have been listening to the thunder of the sea, and I was frightened."

"Yes; the winter is a hard time. But never mind it now."

Then, trembling as if she were going to commit a crime:

"Husband!" she said, "our neighbor is dead. She must have died last night, soon after you went out. She has left two little children, one called Wilhelm and the other Madeline. The boy can hardly toddle, and the girl can only lisp. The poor, good woman was in dreadful want."

The man looked grave. Throwing into a corner his fur cap, sodden by the tempest: "The deuce!" he said, scratching his head. "We already have five children; this makes seven. And already in bad weather we have to go without our supper. What shall we do now? Bah, it is not my fault; it's God's doing. These are things too deep for me. Why has He taken away their mother from these mites? These matters are too difficult to understand. One has to be a scholar to see through them. Such tiny scraps of children! Wife, go and fetch them. If they are awake, they must be frightened to be alone with their dead mother. We will bring them up with ours. They will be brother and sister to our five. When God sees that we have to feed this little girl and boy besides our own, He will let us take more fish. As for me, I will drink water. I will work twice as hard. Enough! Be off and bring them! But what is the matter? Does it vex you? You are generally quicker than this."

His wife drew back the curtain.

"Look!" she said.

We are all to a certain extent creatures of circumstance, but it is not often that circumstance forces a man to become another man, as it did Harry Flint in Bret Harte's story published in the *Strand Magazine*. Happily, but against all the probabilities, he was properly and curiously rewarded for the change of identity.

OUT OF A PIONEER'S TRUNK.

It was a slightly cynical, but fairly good-humored crowd that had gathered before a warehouse on Long Wharf in San Francisco one afternoon in the summer of '51. Although the occasion was an auction, the bidders' chances more than usually hazardous, and the season and locality famous for reckless speculation, there was scarcely any excitement among the bystanders, and a lazy, half humorous curiosity seemed to have taken the place of any zeal for gain.

It was an auction of unclaimed trunks and boxes—the personal luggage of early emigrants—which had been left on storage in hulk or warehouse at San Francisco, while the owner was seeking his fortune in the mines.

The difficulty and expense of transport, often obliging the gold-seeker to make part of his journey on foot, restricted him to the smallest impedimenta, and that of a kind not often found in the luggage of ordinary civilization. As a consequence, during the emigration of '49 he was apt on landing to avail himself of the invitation usually displayed on some of the doors of the rude hostelries on the shore: "Rest for the Weary and Storage for Trunks." In a majority of cases he never returned to claim his stored property. Enforced absence, protracted equally by good or evil fortune, accumulated the high storage charges until they usually far exceeded the actual value of the goods; sickness, further emigration, or death also reduced the number of possible claimants, and that more wonderful human

frailty—absolute forgetfulness of deposited possessions —combined together to leave the bulk of the property in the custodian's hands. Under an understood agreement they were always sold at public auction after a given time. Although the contents of some of the trunks were exposed, it was found more in keeping with the public sentiment to sell the trunks unlocked and unopened. The element of curiosity was kept up from time to time by the incautious disclosures of the lucky or unlucky purchaser, and general bidding thus encouraged—except when the speculator, with the true gambling instinct, gave no indication in his face of what was drawn in this lottery. Generally, however, some suggestion in the exterior of the trunk, a label or initials; some conjectural knowledge of its former owner, or the idea that he might be secretly present in the hope of getting his property back for less than the accumulated dues, kept up the bidding and interest.

A modest-looking, well-worn portmanteau had been just put up at a small opening bid, when Harry Flint joined the crowd. The young man had arrived a week before at San Francisco, friendless and penniless, and had been forced to part with his own effects to procure necessary food and lodging while looking for an employment. In the irony of fate that morning the proprietors of a dry goods store, struck with his good looks and manners, had offered him a situation, if he could make himself more presentable to their fair clients. Harry Flint was gazing half abstractedly, half hopelessly, at the portmanteau without noticing the auctioneer's persuasive challenge.

In his abstraction he was not aware that the auctioneer's assistant was also looking at him curiously, and that possibly his dejected and half-clad appearance had excited the attention of one of the cynical bystanders, who was exchanging a few words with the assistant. He was, however, recalled to himself a moment later, when the portmanteau was knocked down at fifteen dollars, and considerably startled when the assistant placed it at his feet with a grim smile.

"That's your property, Fowler, and I reckon you look as if you wanted it back bad."

"But—there's some mistake," stammered Flint. "I didn't bid."

"No, but Tom Flynn did for you. You see I spotted you from the first, and told Flynn I reckoned you were one of those chaps who came back from the mines dead broke. And he up and bought your things for you—like a square man. That's Flynn's style, if he is a gambler."

"But," persisted Flint, "this never was my property. My name isn't Fowler and I never left anything here."

The assistant looked at him with a grim, half-credulous, half-scornful smile. "Have it your own way," he said, "but I oughter tell ye, old man, that I'm the warehouse clerk, and I remember you. I'm here for that purpose. But as that thar valise is bought and paid for by somebody else and given to you, it's nothing more to me. Take or leave it."

The ridiculousness of quarrelling over the mere form of his good fortune here struck Flint, and, as his abrupt benefactor had as abruptly disappeared, he hurried off with his prize. Reaching his cheap lodging-house he examined its contents. As he had surmised, it contained a full suit of clothing of the better sort and suitable to his urban needs. There were a few articles of jewelry, which he put religiously aside. There were some letters which seemed to be of a purely business character. There were a few daguerreotypes of pretty faces, one of which was singularly fascinating to him. But there was another, of a young man, which startled him with its marvellous resemblance to himself! In a flash of intelligence he understood it all now. It was the likeness of the former owner of the trunk, for whom the assistant had actually mistaken him! He glanced hurriedly at the envelopes of the letters. They were addressed to Shelby Fowler, the name by which the assistant had just called him. The mystery was plain now. And for the present he could fairly accept his good luck and trust to later fortune to justify himself.

Transformed in his new garb, he left his lodgings to present himself once more to his possible employer. His way led past one of the large gambling saloons. It was yet too early to find the dry goods trader disengaged; perhaps the consciousness of more decent, civilized garb emboldened him to mingle more freely with strangers, and he entered the saloon. He was scarcely abreast of one of the faro tables when a man leaped up with an oath and discharged a revolver full in his face. The shot missed. Before his unknown assailant could fire again the astonished Flint had closed with him and instinctively clutched the weapon. A brief but violent struggle ensued. Flint felt his strength failing him, when suddenly a look of astonishment came into the furious eyes of his adversary, and the man's grasp mechanically relaxed. The half-freed pistol, thrown upward by this movement, was accidentally discharged point blank into his temple and he fell dead. No one in the crowd had stirred or interfered.

"You've done for French Pete this time, Mr. Fowler," said a voice at his elbow. He turned gaspingly, and recognized his strange benefactor, Flynn. "I call you all to witness, gentlemen," continued the gambler, turning dictatorially to the crowd, "that this man was first attacked, and was unarmed." He lifted Flint's limp and empty hands, and then pointed to the dead man, who still grasped the weapon. "Come!" He caught the arm of Flint, and dragged him into the street.

"But," stammered the horrified Flint, as he was borne along, "what does it all mean? What made that man attack me?"

"I reckon it was a case of shooting on sight, Mr. Fowler; but he missed it by not waiting to see if you were armed. It wasn't the square thing, and you're all right with the crowd now, whatever he might have had agin you."

"But," protested the unhappy Flint, "I never laid eyes on the man before, and my name isn't Fowler."

Flynn halted, and dragged him in a doorway. "Who the devil are you?" he asked roughly.

Briefly, passionately, almost hysterically, Flint told him his scant story. An odd expression came over the gambler's face.

"Look here," he said, abruptly, "I have passed the word to the crowd yonder that you are a dead broke miner called Fowler. I allowed that you might have had some row with that Sydney duck, Australian Pete, in the mines. That satisfied them. If I go back now and say it's a lie, that your name ain't Fowler, and you never knew who Pete was, they'll jest pass you over to the police to deal with you, and wash their hands of it altogether. You may prove to the police who you are, and how that d—d clerk mistook you, but it will give you trouble. And who is there here who knows who you really are?"

"No one."

"Then take my advice and be Fowler, and stick to it! Be Fowler until Fowler turns up and thanks you for it; for you've saved Fowler's life, as Pete would never have funked and lost his grit over Fowler as he did with you; and you've a right to his name."

He stopped, and the same odd, superstitious look came into his dark eyes.

"Don't you see what all that means? Well, I'll tell you. You're in the biggest streak of luck a man ever had. You've got the cards in your own hands! They spell 'Fowler.' Play Fowler first, last, and all the time. Good night and good luck, Mr. Fowler."

The next morning's journal contained an account of the justifiable killing of the notorious desperado and ex-convict, Australian Pete, by a courageous young miner named Fowler. "An act of firmness and daring," said the *Pioneer*, "which will go far to counteract the terrorism produced by those lawless ruffians."

In his new suit of clothes and with this paper in his hand, Flint sought the dry goods proprietor—the latter was satisfied and convinced. That morning Harry Flint began his career as salesman and as "Shelby Fowler."

From that day Shelby Fowler's career was one of uninterrupted prosperity. Within the year he became a

partner. The same miraculous fortune followed other ventures later. He was mill owner, mine owner, bank director—a millionaire! He was popular, the reputation of his brief achievement over the desperado kept him secure from the attacks of envy and rivalry. He never was confronted by the real Fowler. There was no danger of exposure by others—the one custodian of his secret, Tom Flynn, died in Nevada the year following. He had quite forgotten his youthful past, and even the more recent lucky portmanteau; remembered nothing, perhaps, but the pretty face of the daguerreotype that had fascinated him. There seemed to be no reason why he should not live and die as Shelby Fowler.

His business a year later took him to Europe. He was entering a train at one of the great railway stations of London, when the porter, who had just deposited his portmanteau in a compartment, reappeared at the window, followed by a young lady in mourning.

"Beg pardon, sir, but I handed you the wrong portmanteau. That belongs to this lady. This is yours."

Flint glanced at the portmanteau on the seat before him. It certainly was not his, although it bore the initials "S. F." He was mechanically handing it back to the porter, when his eyes fell on the young lady's face. It was the face of the daguerreotype. "I beg pardon," he stammered, "but are these your initials?"

She hesitated; perhaps it was the abruptness of the question, but he saw she was confused. "No. A friend's."

She disappeared into another carriage, but from that moment Harry Flint knew that he had no other aim in life than to follow that clew and the beautiful girl who dropped it. He bribed the guard at the next station, and discovered that she was going to New York. On their arrival he was ready on the platform to respectfully assist her. A few words disclosed the fact that she was a fellow-countrywoman, although residing in England, and at present on her way to join some friends at Harrogate. Her name was West. At the mention of this he again fancied she looked disturbed.

They met again and again; the informality of his introduction was overlooked by her friends, as his assumed name was already respectably and responsibly known beyond California. He thought no more of his future. He was in love. He even dared to think it might be returned; but he felt he had no right to seek that knowledge until he had told her his real name and how he came to assume another's. He did so alone—scarcely a month after their first meeting. To his alarm, she burst into a flood of tears, and showed an agitation that seemed far beyond any apparent cause. When she had partly recovered she said, in a low, frightened voice:

"You are bearing my brother's name. But it was a name that the unhappy boy had so shamefully disgraced in Australia that he abandoned it, and, as he lay upon his deathbed, the last act of his wasted life was to write an imploring letter begging me to change mine too. For the infamous companion of his crime, who had first tempted, then betrayed him, had possession of all his papers and letters, many of them from me, and was threatening to bring them to our Virginia home and expose him to our neighbors. Maddened by desperation, the miserable boy twice attempted the life of the scoundrel, and might have added that of blood-guiltiness to his other sins had he lived. I did change my name to my mother's maiden one, left the country, and have lived here to escape the revelations of that desperado should he fulfill his threat."

In a flash of recollection Flint remembered the startled look that had come into his assailant's eye after they had clinched. It was the same man who had too late realized that his antagonist was not Fowler. "Thank God! you are forever safe from any exposure from that man," he said gravely, "and the name of Fowler has never been known in San Francisco save in all respect and honor. It is for you to take back—fearlessly and alone."

She did, but not alone, for she shared it with her husband.

Tragedy in human life is not confined to cities, but nowhere else are its surroundings so piquant and diverting. The scene of the Livingstone Inquest is the undertaker's establishment, and around the touching spectacle of a woman's love and self-sacrifice, the writer, who will please send his name to ROMANCE, has stretched a group of characteristic city types.

THE LIVINGSTONE INQUEST.

THE close and gloomy middle room of the undertaker's establishment, into which the blurred daylight forced itself with difficulty through the dingy glass in the upper part of the cheap partition that formed the little office in front, was uncomfortably filled with curious idlers, who stared with impudent freedom at the group of four persons seated near the long, unpainted deal table, of tremulous age and strength, whose battered and careworn countenance, brown with dirt and variegated here and there with sprawling ink spots, seemed to smile grimly in return.

Notwithstanding an indefinable air of repose about the otherwise stiff figure that was bent forward slightly, and the well-bred, elegantly gloved hands quietly folded in the lap, it was easy to see from the occasional compression of the thin, aristocratic lips over the firm mouth, the restless tapping of the foot, the twitching of the cold, gray eyes behind the heavy gold eyeglasses, and the nervous rustling of the black silk dress, that the oldest one of the four was highly irritated about something. Probably it was not altogether the stupid staring of the crowd, the keen, searching glances of the reporters, the morgue-like odor, the grimy and dilapidated furniture, the depressing rows of sample coffins gaping solemnly from the farther wall, or the gaudy advertising prints of undertakers' supplies meeting her eyes at every turn that grated upon madame's nerves so harshly; for, after one comprehensive glance around, the gold

eyeglasses had been steadily fixed upon the profile of the youngest one of the four.

Perhaps it was the utter indifference in that deathly pale face—still whiter in contrast with the dark, disordered masses of short, curly hair above and around it—the hopelessness in the great black eyes that were fixed blankly in front, and the appeaance of complete dejection in the slight, frail form that was sharply outlined against the huge blue bulk of the policeman sitting close beyond her, that had made the gray eyes so hard and cruel.

The silence of the room was broken by the jury, which, having been duly sworn over the body in the back room, filed slowly in, and following the wave of the deputy coroner's hand ranged themselves alongside the table in the small space grudgingly yielded by the reporters.

Meanwhile the deputy coroner, as he proceeded to remove his writing materials from his leather case, glanced about the room with the pardonable pride of the most important man present. Such a scene was not new to him; but, as he confidentially remarked to the mild, intellectual-looking young man, foreman of the jury at his left, it was no "bum" inquest; and he secretly felt sure it would get at least a column and a half in the morning. He therefore surveyed the crowd of faces with more interest than usual, and his voice was the voice of authority as he opened proceedings:

"Well, cap, are the witnesses all here? I suppose that's the girl?"

The gray eyes contracted slightly and became harder; and the blue eyes of the young foreman, following the deputy's nod, showed a mild surprise that the profile remained motionless, and evinced no recognition of the coarse interrogation.

The tall captain of police, standing at the deputy's back, leaned over and answered, in a confidential tone:

"Yes, that's her; and the landlady is the second one there, and her kid's the third. The stiff old party in black is the mother. Officer O'Malley, who made the

arrest, ain't here yet. The lieutenant sent him down street early this morning to pick up a 'con' man that he knows well by sight, that we thought we had located last night. He shouldn't have been sent out, and I made a kick when I got down this morning, but they said he would be back by ten sure. I expect him every minute. I met the doctor not ten minutes ago, and he ought to be here by this time. There's only a few witnesses."

"That was dead wrong to let O'Malley go. But where's the wife? Ain't she here?"

"We didn't find her boarding place until late last night, and then they said she had went away yesterday afternoon about three, saying she was going to spend the night with some friend in Brooklyn. We couldn't get no clue to the friend, but I've got a man watching the house, and he'll get her the minute she comes back. But she don't know anything about it, anyway, I don't suppose, because she wasn't living with him, you know."

The slight scowl on the deputy's face, which deepened at the embarrassed answer, showed plainly that the excuse was ineffectual.

"Now, look here, cap, this won't do, and you know it. Here's an important case: a man is found dead with a bullet in his head, and a girl by him with a 'gun' in her hand; no powder marks on his face at all; he hasn't been living with his wife for years. Now, it's a dead sure thing she knows something about this girl. And the two principal witnesses not here—her and O'Malley!"

The deputy coroner evidently relieved his feelings somewhat by thumping his last tab of paper on the table, leaning back in his chair, and thrusting his hands deeply and viciously into his trousers pockets; for, after a shrug and a glance at the jury, indicating that he felt sure they appreciated the stupidity and incapacity of some people, he continued, resignedly:

"Well, we'll go on as far as we can. Send two of your men out, cap, for O'Malley and the wife. Here!

I'll give you a subpœna for her, if she kicks. Arrest her if she won't come. We *must* have her."

"Madame, will you take the witness chair?"

The gold eye-glasses were withdrawn from the profile only while their owner stepped quietly forward, and took the vacant seat next to the deputy, and then they resumed their pitiless stare.

"Your name, if you please?"

"Esther Henrietta Livingstone."

"Your residence?"

"At 'The Eddies,' in the highlands, where the family have lived for forty years."

"You are the mother of the deceased?"

"I am."

"Is his father living?"

"He is. He was in feeble health, and this blow has utterly prostrated him."

The gold eye-glasses saw that the profile showed signs of life at this, and they communicated that fact to the gloved hands, which closed upon each other tightly. The foreman saw it, too, and he wondered vaguely if the dead face in the back room resembled the other pale one on the Hudson.

"Was the deceased born in this country?"

The gray eyes swung around in indignation, but the examiner was busily writing, and the well-bred sneer of the answer was wholly lost upon him:

"I beg pardon?"

"I say, was your son born in this country?"

"He was; and so was his father, his grandfather, and his great-grandfather before him. He was descended from one of the signers of the Declaration."

The gold eye-glasses were on duty again, and consequently did not see the wink that the reporters answered, nor the smile upon the face bending over the pen.

"How old was the deceased?"

"Forty-two."

"What was his business?"

"His *profession* was literature. He was a contributor to numerous periodicals and various humorous publica-

tions. I believe he was for a time a reporter. My son had decided literary ability, but some unfortunate associations sapped his ambition, and prevented his attaining the position for which his talents qualified him."

"Your son was married, was he not?"

"He was."

"Living with his wife?"

"I have understood they were separated. If you *must* have those details, be kind enough to reserve them for *her* examination."

The wink went along the table again, while the crowd exchanged significant glances, and then leaned forward eagerly to catch the next answer.

"Do you know this young woman under arrest?"

The gold eye-glasses remained steady, but the gloved hands pressed each other again nervously, and the thin lips closed sharply before answering:

"I do not. I never saw her and never heard of her before to-day. My acquaintance among her class is limited."

The cutting answer brought more blood into the foreman's face than into the profile.

"I believe that's all, madame; but you will please remain here, so we can recall you if anything develops to make it necessary."

As the tall, proud figure vacated the chair, a thin, cadaverous-looking young man, decidedly out of breath, wearing a fur-trimmed, military overcoat and a muddy silk hat, forced his way through the crowd, and, as he removed his gloves, bowed smilingly to the deputy and several of the reporters, with the air of a man perfectly at home.

"I'm in an awful hurry. Got a bad case up at the hospital waiting for me. Can't you put me through now? Won't take a minute. I don't know much, any way."

The deputy nodded towards the chair.

"Your name is Arnold W. Meyer, and you are one of the assistants at Bellevue?"

The witness smiled an assent.

"Tell us all you know about this case, doctor, briefly."

"I happened to be passing along that street yesterday afternoon, and stopped to say 'Howd'y' to Officer O'Malley, who was at one time a patient in the hospital, when a little boy—this little fellow here—rushed up to us and said he guessed there was somebody shot upstairs. I followed O'Malley up, and found a man lying on his back in bed, dead, with a bullet wound in the temple, and a young girl—this girl here, I believe—on the floor suffering from an acute attack of hysteria. Those attacks, while not at all dangerous, may come on very suddenly, and often produce great rigidity of the muscles; and in this case the patient's right hand—which, by the way, was loosely bandaged with a man's bloody handkerchief—was closed so firmly upon a revolver that it required all of O'Malley's strength to force it open. A hasty examination convinced me that she was an hysterical patient and in no danger, and I turned her over to the care of a woman present, while I proceeded to make a further examination of the deceased. There were no powder marks upon the face. The bullet, which was from a 38-calibre revolver, had entered the left temple a little above and to the left of the eye. It was not deeply imbedded, and was extracted without difficulty. It is still in perfect shape, and without a dent, indicating that it encountered no serious resistance from any bony substance. Evidently the blood had been carefully wiped from the face of the deceased. I noticed spots of blood upon the lips and nose of the prisoner. The bed-clothing was smooth, and was neatly arranged about the neck of the deceased. That's about all, I think."

With the precision and self-possession of a professional witness the doctor produced the bullet, unwrapped the cotton about it, handed it to the deputy, and awaited questions.

The silence in the room was so profound that it was a relief to hear the voice of the examiner:

"Doctor, a 38-calibre revolver is a pretty big gun, ain't it, and shoots mighty strong?"

"Well, *rather*," and the witness smiled significantly at the reporters.

"And you say the bullet didn't strike any thick bone?"

"There were no indications of it on the bullet, and the probe gave none; and indeed you wouldn't expect to find any at that point."

"And yet the bullet was near the surface? And there were no powder marks on deceased? How do you account for that, if deceased shot himself?"

"Well, I *don't* account for it. It seems to me that's what the jury are here for. I simply give you facts."

But the cross-examiner was persistent.

"Well, do you think it possible for a sick man to shoot himself with a gun of that size without leaving powder marks on his face? and do you think the bullet would spend its force in penetrating that distance?"

The doctor did not smile, as he answered:

'It seems very improbable to me. That's all I care to say about that."

The black dress rustled triumphantly, and there was a palpable sensation among the spectators. But neither the foreman's mild blue eyes nor the gold eye-glasses could discover any quiver in the marble-like profile.

With a brisk "Is that all?" the doctor grabbed his surgical case and hat, and retired smilingly.

"Mrs. Barber, will you please take the stand?"

She was a neat, middle-aged woman, with wavy, iron-gray hair, whose parchment-like skin seemed stretched so tensely over her face as to suggest that there was danger of the prominent cheek-bones bursting through it; and with the large veins of the face showing plainly, and giving her a ruddy appearance.

After adjusting her faded black shawl, she faced the examiner with decision.

"Your name is what?"

"Mary Ann Barber."

"A widow?"

"'Deed I'm not. Do I look it?"

The laugh was on the deputy coroner, and his manner was not quite so flippant, as he proceeded:

"Where do you live, Mrs. Barber?"

"509 West 43d Street. I've got the two top floors there, and rent rooms."

"The deceased was one of your roomers, wasn't he?"

"Yes, sir, he was, for close on to two years, and a nicer, gentlemanlier man never lived, neither; only he stayed up so late at night writing, and I'm thinkin' that's what made him sick so often, poor man."

"Just answer the questions, Mrs. Barber, and don't talk so fast, please, and we'll get along better. Do you know the accused here?

"If you mean the young leddy, indeed, I do, bless her sweet face; and I think it's a shame to arrest her when she was the only one thought enough of him to come near him when he was sick; and I have seen her draggin' herself up them stairs after her day's work was over, poor child, and her face so white and tired-like, and her beautiful black eyes so sad and sweet, that I could almost a-cried for her; and she would go and nurse him just like a sister; and when he would have one of them wild, ravin' spells she could just put her hand on his forehead and he would quiet down like a lamb; and then towards the last, when she didn't come for a long time, he would say, pleadin'-like, 'Don't you think she'll come to-day, Mrs. Barber?' and I'd always say, 'Yes, she'll surely come to-day, sir,' for I didn't have the heart to tell him I thought she must be sick."

The witness stopped to wipe her eyes here, and that gave the coroner a chance to catch up and put in another question:

"For how long a time has she been coming to see him in this way?"

"Every time he was sick until the last time; and he was sick three or four times."

"She never came unless he was sick, then?"

It was the foreman's voice that interjected this question, and the witness seemed instinctively to recognize a friendly note in it, for she turned and beamed upon him:

"No, indeed, sir; never."

"Then you never knew her to stay all night, I suppose?" resumed the deputy coroner, with a shade of timidity. The dilation of the veins and the nervous readjustment of the shawl foreshadowed the emphatic answer.

"Indeed I didn't, sir. I believe she was a good girl; and you needn't ask me any more questions, for I won't answer 'em."

"How late did you ever know her to stay?"

"If he was very sick she'd sometimes stay as late as ten o'clock, and then I'd send my Jimmie to the cars with her."

"Now, Mrs. Barber, tell us about this occurrence yesterday."

"Well, sir, it was just about four o'clock, as I know by havin' my bread in the oven, and I was watching the time close; and there was one of them rovin' German bands down in the street playin' like mad and makin' a dreadful noise, and my Jimmie he was home ailin' that afternoon, and I was afraid they'd wake him up, and I just stepped to the door to look down, nervous-like, notwithstandin' I couldn't see nothin' in the street, you know, and I seen the young leddy comin' up the stairs so white-like and troubled in the face that I thinks to myself somethin' was wrong, and her eyes was kind o' set and starin'-like, and so when she passed the landin' I was just inside the door, and she never noticed me at all, notwithstandin' she always smiled so sweet before, and so I never said nothin' to her, but went back, wonderin' what ailed the poor child, and just looked at my bread and shut the oven door and straightened up, and then I heard a noise like a pistol-shot, thick and muffled-like, and them foreigners was playin' furious all the while, and I wasn't sure what it was, and I went back to the door and looked up and down the stairs, and I couldn't see nothin' nor hear nothin', and I stood there a minute or two, and then my Jimmie come out of the back room, which the same is just below the dead gentleman's, and has a window on the same court, and his eyes was poppin' out and he says,

'Maw, did you hear that?' and I says, 'Hear what, Jimmie?' a-knowin' all the time what he meant, and he says, 'A gun, maw,' and says I, 'Jimmie, are you *sure* you heard a gun?' and he says, 'Sure, maw; it was right over me,' and with that I was took a-tremblin', and I says, 'Run quick, Jimmie, and get a policeman,' and that boy he went down them stairs four at a jump till I thought he would disconnect his neck, and it seems he found a policeman a block away, with another doctor, and me and Jimmie went up after them, and there was the young gentleman dead, and the young leddy a-squirmin' and convulsin' on the floor, dreadful, and her teeth set and her hands clenched tight, and the officer put her on the easy-chair, and pretty soon she got quiet-like, and then the officer took her away, and that's all I know."

"From the time you saw her in the hall until you heard the shot, how long was it?"

"Well, sir, I watched her out of sight on the next landing, and then I went straight to my oven and opened it, and looked at my bread, and then straightened up, and then I heard it. Maybe it was a minute."

"After you heard the shot, would it have been possible for any one to have rushed down the stairs without you seeing them?"

"No, indeed, sir, for I was in the room where the door was open every minute, and I walked right straight back to the door again, and my Jimmie, he come there and talked, and then I stood right there until the three come up the stairs."

The captain of police leaned over and whispered to the deputy coroner.

"Now, Mrs. Barber, didn't you see a revolver in the prisoner's hands, and didn't O'Malley take it away the first thing?"

The witness's volubility had apparently deserted her. She glanced furtively at the foreman as if for help, and then said, "Yes, sir," in a low tone and with averted eyes.

"And after the girl had quieted down in the chair,

didn't she say in substance, 'Oh! I've killed him! I've killed him!'—repeating it two or three times in answer to O'Malley's question, as to how it happened?"

"Yes, sir; she moaned it like. But I don't think she meant——"

"Never mind what you think. How long was it from the time she passed you on the landing until you all reached the room up stairs?"

"It seemed dreadful long, but maybe it wasn't more'n six or eight minutes."

"That's all, Mrs. Barber. I suppose your 'Jimmie' don't know anything more than you've told, but we'll ask him a few questions."

The boy Jimmie, who clasped the bottom of the witness chair nervously with his legs, finding them too short to reach the floor, and who apparently found great difficulty in disposing of his hands properly, corroborated the two preceding witnesses, merely adding that the band awakened him, and that after hearing a woman's exclamation, followed by a shot, he lay quiet for a few moments, and then ran in to his mother.

"Well, cap, let her come in now!"

A bustle, and a woman's penetrating voice in the office, during 'Jimmie's' examination, followed by a whispered consultation between the captain and deputy, had prepared every one for this audible remark, as the boy slid down from the chair and over to his mother; and all eyes were concentrated upon a handsome, self-possessed woman of about thirty-five, whose tailor-made suit of blue (bringing out clearly the fine lines of the willowy form), bleached hair, and stylish hat were in perfect keeping with her jaunty air and manner. There was a touch of the theatrical, and more of self-consciousness than of sincerity about her, as she leaned over and kissed the prisoner, saying glibly:

"I'm so sorry, dear, but do you know I never heard a word of this until I got back from Brooklyn this morning and found the officers waiting for me! It was dreadful of them to lock you up."

There was no response save a faint tinge of color and

an almost imperceptible shrinking, which was not noticed by the witness, whose restless eyes showed no embarrassment, as they swept the reporters and jury, until they encountered the gold eye-glasses. Then they recoiled abruptly and went to the floor at the scornful curling of the thin lips that was the only recognition vouchsafed them. The foreman felt a positive sense of relief on finding that the vindictive gray eyes had at last found something more interesting than the helpless profile.

"Your name, please?"

"Mamie Barnard Livingstone."

"You are the wife of the deceased?"

"Yes, sir; we have been married over eight years."

"I suppose, Mrs. Livingstone, you don't know anything about this affair yesterday?"

"No, indeed. I was visiting in Brooklyn last night, and didn't see a paper this morning, and only heard of it when I got back home."

The deputy coroner had evidently been a good deal nonplussed at the witness's friendly attitude towards the accused, and at this point he turned and whispered confidentially with the foreman and captain, and then said slowly and with some hesitation, to the puzzled and expectant witness:

"Mrs. Livingstone, we understand you haven't been living with your husband for several years, but we thought maybe you could throw some light on his relations to this girl. We don't know whether she will be willing to testify or not, because she hasn't talked any so far. The case looks mighty ugly for her up to date. Now, can you tell us anything about her and him? First, do you know her full name and who she is?"

"Her name is Alice Ellery. She is an orphan, and her grandparents, who are poor, live in New Hampshire somewhere. She is an independent child, and with a little money they loaned her she came to New York to earn her own living. We met her in a boarding-house three years ago. She was an ingenuous, straightforward and very sweet-tempered girl, but dread-

fully sensitive and inclined to melancholy. She is a natural nurse, and she helped me nurse my husband through a bad spell of sickness, and he was very grateful, and was very kind to her afterwards. She was sewing at the time, for she is a wonderful seamstress, too, but he induced her to take up shorthand and typewriting, and got a friend of his, a reporter, to teach her, and as she is a very bright girl naturally, she soon picked it up. I guess they got to be pretty fond of each other right away without knowing it."

The witness stopped here and turned towards the prisoner a face that was wholly non-committal. In trying to fathom the meaning of the look the foreman discovered an exultant glitter behind the gold eye-glasses that were once more on duty. He noticed then that the profile was still motionless, but saw a great tear roll down and spatter upon the attenuated hand that was clasping its fellow tightly.

Could it be possible that there were any tears left in those strained eyes? Yes, there was another spatter—another—another! Perhaps she will move now—raise her hand—change her position even a little bit—draw those long, sweeping eyelashes over the dry, hot eyes just once—breathe heavily, or sigh—do something, anything—for it made him nervous to watch her, and she must be nearly blind looking at that one spot in the dirty white wall! But, no, she does not move, and the drops have ceased spattering. There were only a few, after all. Perhaps the witness did not notice them, for her voice has not softened any as she proceeds.

"Mr. Livingstone was very irregular in his habits as well as in his literary work. He could almost command his own price for his humorous short stories, he had a good income from his books, and he could have been kept busy all the time with what he called his 'buncoe work'—advertising paragraphs and articles—which he despised; but the fact was that usually he didn't write much except when he was laid up. Then, when he was not *too* sick, he would write nearly all night in a little hall bedroom upstairs, where his 'treadmill' and 'mill-

stone' were, as he used to say. Although the doctors hadn't discovered it at that time, they afterwards decided that my husband had 'Bright's disease'; and, as he was perfectly reckless of his health, he had frequent spells of sickness, lasting two or three weeks at a stretch, when he would be delirious at intervals. At those times it was perfectly remarkable that her hand on his forehead or her simple presence in the room would quiet him almost instantly, even when he was rambling. He seemed to have a mere physical apprehension of her presence without being able to identify her; and when she was absent, it was really pitiful to see him watch for her, and call her by the pet name she went by in the house. The consequence was that she helped me nearly every time he was sick, even after her work compelled her to move to a distant boarding-house. In fact, she became almost a necessity to us eventually, for, as he became more dependent on her, his habitual indifference to me developed into an active antipathy, which finally got to be unbearable, when he foolishly convinced himself that I was instrumental in lessening her visits, which had begun to cause some remark; so that ultimately my presence, when he was delirious, was as irritating and exciting to him as hers was soothing. Mr. Livingstone was a most peculiar man—a man of few but intense friendships, reserved and gloomy among strangers or mere acquaintances, exceedingly sensitive, and of a very jealous disposition; and he accused me one day before several people——"

The witness stopped abruptly, as though recalling herself, and for the first time showed deep feeling. Her flippancy was gone, and the voice was low, hard and deliberate, as she resumed, after another peculiar look at the prisoner:

"Is it necessary for me, Mr. Coroner, to go into these details? I suppose it will be sufficient to say that our natures were utterly and hopelessly incompatible, and that it took us about six years to find it out—took *me* that long, at least. Then we separated. I knew then perfectly well that he loved her—and I didn't care."

The slight lifting of the eyebrows did not entirely mask the bitter smile that gave the lie to this last remark.

"I felt sorry for *her*. She had then long since ceased coming, and was distressed at the thought that she had caused a separation that would have been just as inevitable if we had never seen her."

The glitter in the gray eyes had deepened into a glare that the witness seemed to feel, and to defy sullenly; and it occurred to the foreman that her non-committal glances at the accused were merely foils against the gray shafts of anger that she had not the courage to openly repel.

"Before we separated she was sick for a time, for she has heart trouble, poor child, and went back home for a visit, but she never answered the letters that I knew he wrote her, and he blamed me for that. I have scarcely seen him or her for a year and a half, but I understand they have been together more or less. She was a good girl when I knew her then. If she isn't now he's to blame for it, and she *ought* to have killed him!"

The ashen profile quivered cruelly, and the witness started apprehensively at the sudden rustling of the black silk dress beside her, and then for the first time turned defiantly towards the trembling eye-glasses; the captain of police involuntarily bent forward, as if to put out his arm; the crowd buzzed its satisfaction.

After a quite animated but inaudible conference between the deputy coroner and the jury, who withdrew in a bunch to the only space available between two pine boxes standing upright against the wall, the former said, with a meaning look:

"Captain, please find Mrs. Livingstone a seat. The jury want her to stay here for the present, in case they should want to learn anything further from her."

There was a suggestion of a sneer in the witness's faint smile, as she sharply ran her eyes down the line of jurymen, and then, with a bow, accepted the seat next to the accused, which the policeman relinquished.

"O'Malley has been here for some time, coroner, if you want him."

This announcement was scarcely needed, for every one had long since guessed the identity of the round, fat, scarlet-faced policeman, whose bright and jovial eyes showed clearly that the brain moved quicker than the ponderous frame below. The camp stool, which had been dignified by the name of "witness chair," creaked a loud protest as he deposited himself distrustfully in it, resting one hand upon the table as a sort of anchor; and his genial red face reminded the foreman of the moon just rising through a fog.

"Your name is O'Malley, and you are on the force?"

"Yis'r; Michael O'Malley; an' Oi've been on the foorce nine years lasht Chrishmas."

"Officer, we've already had enough testimony as to how you was called yesterday afternoon—it ain't important, anyhow—so just begin when you got into the room."

"Sure Oi got in the room first, an' Oi didn't have to run to git in ahead of the docther ather;" and the witness winked at the furthest juryman, who appeared to be an acquaintance.

"Anny one cud see the man was dead, and, 'pon me sowl, I thought at first the gurrl was dyin' too, from the way she was curled up and a-breathin', shwift an' raspin'-like betwixt her teeth, that was fasht together, for all the world like she had the lockjaw. Oi didn't bother about the dayceased, but Oi tuk roight holt of the gurrl, and then Oi obsarved she had a big gun in her roight hand, and whin Oi wint to pull it away, sure it wouldn't come, she had such a grip on it. Says Oi, 'Loose the gun, little gurrl.' Her ois was only half open, an' she only shtared at me, crazy-loike, and niver sid a wurrd, an' by me sowl, it tuk both me hands to git the gun, an' the minnit Oi let go, sure her hand shut up loike a pair of 'cuffs! Thin Oi lifted her in a chair, and purty soon she breathed azier, an' thin comminced fur to sob and cry so harrd that it shuk her all over, an' she was lamentin' about the man, and cryin'

an' moanin' that she had kilt him. Sure Oi cudn't thruely tell what she did say—only she had kilt him, an' she had intinded to go wid him. Thin the landlady soothed her and puthered about her, woman-loike, you know, an' Oi looked about the room."

"Now, officer, tell us something about the doors and windows. The jury saw the room this morning, but they want to know how things was yesterday."

"Sure Oi seen another dure, but it was locked, an' Oi didn't bother to look for the kay, because the landlady sid it was a closet where he kept his thrunk and papers, an' it was mostly locked. The windy on the coort was open about a fut at the bottom. Sure, you cudn't call it a coort, anyhow, but jist a bit of a shaft fur loight, wid glass above, and about forty feet deep from this windy. There was a shmall table 'longside the bid, an' Oi picked up a letther that was lyin' open there nixt to the anwellup. The postman was gin'rally around there about three, an' I s'pose he brought it, fur it's shtamped yisterday."

So intent was every one upon the bit of paper, awkwardly produced and deposited upon the table, that only the watchful eye-glasses noticed that for the first time the prisoner turned her head and followed the paper with piteous, pleading eyes; but as the letter was removed from the envelope every one noticed that her forehead was lowered upon the back of the reporter's chair in front of her, and that the tangled hair was still as death again; while the deputy coroner vainly endeavored to decipher the writing by the single flickering gas jet, and then laid it down with the remark that he would read it when O'Malley was through. The gold eye-glasses settled back calmly and appeared pleased. The jaunty hat bent over and murmured something sympathetically to the curly hair, but received no answer.

"The docther sid the man was dead, an' the gurrl was all roight, and he wud ring up the wagon. So whin the b'ys got there Oi locked up the room and tuk the gurrl to the station. She didn't talk no more."

"The doctor said he saw blood on the nose and lips of the girl. Do you know how it got there?"

"Sure, Oi don't, but it's azey guessin' she kissed him."

"Did you notice a bloody handkerchief around her hand?"

"Yis'r, and the woman troied to take it off afther I tuk the gun away; but she held it toight, an' wudn't let it go, an' Oi didn't bother about it, and she had it whin Oi turned her in."

"May be Hudson, the 'lock-up,' has got that, coroner," the captain explained. "When they booked her she had such a kind of a wild, desperate look that I was afraid she might try to harm herself somehow, and I left word for Hudson, when he come on, to watch her cell closely all night. We couldn't get anything out of her about her friends, and concluded she didn't have any in the city. I left strict orders not to let any of the reporters near her, for I didn't think it was hardly fair to the poor girl to have them worrying her. Hudson was to drop in here this morning, after he had a little nap, but I'll send for him now."

Mrs. Barber, whose face had been getting redder and redder, and who had been shifting uneasily in her chair ever since O'Malley produced the paper, arose timidly at this point, and taking a torn and much soiled letter from under her shawl, tremblingly handed it to the surprised deputy, saying: "I sp'ose you've got a right to it, sir, but I didn't think I was doing no harm when I took it from her. It dropped out of her dress, when I unbuttoned it, on the chair, to let her breathe easier, and I put it away, thinkin' I'd keep it for her."

"It's all right now, madame, only you ought to have give it to the officer at the time."

"I guess that's all we want of O'Malley. I'll read these letters now."

The deputy coroner arose in his seat amid perfect stillness, leaned towards the one miserable gas jet, and unfolded the letter last handed him. Every one could see the ragged hole through the centre, and that the sheets were badly soiled and crumpled, and profusely

smeared with blood; but the faint traces of the tears were noticed only by the foreman, who had been looking eagerly over the deputy's shoulder, and who said, quietly but almost peremptorily, as he reached out and took the letter from the surprised deputy's hand:

"That's his writing. I didn't know him, but I'm proof-reader in a publishing house, and I've seen lots of his 'copy.' Let *me* read it."

Taking the deputy's place, he read both letters with but slight hesitation, stopping only at intervals to clear his throat and bite his lips vigorously when his eyes moistened.

"Monday, April 25th, 18—.

"My Darling:

"It is many, many days now since you have been to see me. I ask myself hopefully each morning, 'Will she be here to-day?' and answer wearily each evening, 'No, but perhaps to-morrow.'

"Just think, dear, you have not been to see me once since I have had my last illness! What is my punishment for? *Must* you be so cruel?

"Oh! darling, tear away that disfiguring mask of conventionality, and for the short time that life is left me let me see only the love that I know—that you have confessed—lurks in those dear eyes!

"But I shall not scold you any more—only come to me, darling! Come to me again! I am very lonely.

"I have not been able to write much lately. Mr. Loveland sends up every few days for 'copy,' only to be disappointed. I think I could write better if I could see you for a little while. *Won't* you come?

"It is such dreary work lying here all alone, listening to the little clock calling off the hours, and watching the sunbeams marking them in a half circle on the floor,. Occaionally the vague hum of the city steals in upon me, and it is is always like a message from you. Even the doctor's visit is a relief—not because his eyes show me that he can do more than put off for a little while longer that moment which you dread and I really

long for, but because he is the only one I can talk to of you. He says he meets you occasionally on the street, and then I have him tell me all that you said, and just where it was, so that after he is gone I can follow you better with my eyes through the busy streets and over the crowded bridge to the stuffy street car; and then when you alight I am waiting; and the touch of your hand, the love in your eyes, as we walk slowly along the quiet streets, under the friendly trees, and the stolen kiss in the hallway help to take away some of the ache of the parting!

"Mrs. Barber is very kind to me, but she is very busy with her own work, and cares, and only runs in occasionally—and then I can't talk of you to her!

"Say, dear, I haven't been on any spree with any one since I saw you long ago! I haven't been as careful and abstemious as I should have been, but I can't say that I have spreed around much. Not that self-respect has protected me, for I never respect myself so much as when I am having a good time. It is you that have made it possible. Now, won't you come and get your reward?

"Do you know, dear, that when a man climbs to the zenith of his years, and finds there the only woman in whose truth, whose honor, whose steadfastness, judgment and sturdy honesty he ever believed it safe to put all his confidence and faith, her approval of his deeds becomes the standard of his conduct. Isn't that true, dear? And if you were only with me, wouldn't I be a better man?

"You will let me know beforehand when you are coming, won't you, dear? So that it will fill up the weary hours, and help me also to fight off those spells that blot the world out from my wide-opened eyes.

"Oh! I am so afraid you will come when the light is out! If you do, dear, wait until it comes back, won't you? Put your arm around me if I fail to know you at first, and that will bring me to you. I love you! I love you so, darling! My love for you has crushed all my pride and every other feeling. I cannot resent what

you say or do, I can only plead and pray that you will not hurt me any more than you can help.

"And if you won't come, won't you write to me, dear? And when you write, speak to me as you did that evening so long ago when you broke down your hideous resolution not to let me caress you again, and, yielding as I drew you closer to me—nearer still—let me force from you a whispered word that bewildered and stunned me!

"It is slow work writing, for I have to stop often and rest when it becomes too painful. But I can write best late at night, as you know, for then the old Bohemian days comes back again, and I can hear the music of the glasses and the merry voices; and the aroma of the tobacco seems to come stealing about me, bringing back the absent trick of the hand and brain!

"Do you know that daylight is stealing in at the window and falling across the page? All night long I have been alternately writing to you and leaning back thinking of the things about which the pen must be dumb!

"My strength is gone with the night, and I can only cry 'Come!'

"See! I have written you a long letter, and I am *so* tired! *Please come.* I love you!

"STANLEY."

"Tuesday night.

"Dear Mr. Livingstone:

"Your letter almost broke my heart. It does seem cruel to stay away from you when you are so lonely and suffering so; but, oh! what can I do? What can I do?

"Isn't it bad enough to love you—you, who gave that right to another—without permitting that to lead on to a crime?

"Oh! please don't write me such a pitiful letter again. You are breaking my heart, Stanley! If you only knew the daily, hourly struggle between my wishes and my consscience—my love and my pride!

"If I believed you were dying, all the whole world should not keep me from you. But the doctor says you will get well, about as well as ever, again.

"I have struggled so hard, so hard, to do what I know is right; but when you are well then the old struggle must come all over again, and I am worn out and must go away alone.

"I am going back to grandfather's, to the old home, where the dear old faces night and morning look down the road for my coming. Yes, yes, yes, I do love you. I will not lie about it. It is my first, my only love; and, God knows, I think it will be my last. For we are at the parting of the ways, Stanley. I must go my way, and you yours. I can live no longer in this madhouse of a city. I think it will be easier for me when I am alone with the hills, and the trees and the dumb animals that I can talk to of you. And you—you will forget me—no! no! you won't forget me, will you, Stanley? Only think of me as one who has gone forever out of your life here, but who will meet you again sometime—sometime!

"I am going away to-morrow night, Stanley. I know you love me—yes, better than I will ever be loved again on this earth, but it must not be—it *cannot* be.

"I cannot write, for it is torture. I dare not trust myself to see you again, but I send you a thousand kisses. God bless you, Stanley! I *do* love you!

"ALICE."

The foreman laid down the letters and turned his head away. The jurors' eyes were upon the floor. The gold eye-glasses, with a softness that they had not shown before, were again riveted upon the curly head that had not once moved. The deputy coroner raised his head, which had been very close to the table, although he had not been writing, and, with an unsuccessful attempt at a smile, said quietly to the jury:

"Well, boys, that don't sound much like a murder. If she could only explain about them powder marks!"

Then raising his voice slightly, he turned to the prisoner:

"Miss Ellery, it is my duty to tell you that the law does not compel you to make any statement here. You

can refuse to say a word, and it can't be taken against you. But if you can explain how it is that there was no powder marks on the face of the deceased, maybe that will explain also how it was that the bullet was so near the surface, and then I guess the jury would have an easy case here."

Some of the jurors nodded assentingly; while the crowd elbowed one another grumblingly, as a policeman pushed his way to the front, and then held its breath again. The prisoner did not move.

"That's easy explained. Look at her hand!"

The strong, rough voice of the new-comer acted like an electric shock.

"This is Hudson, coroner."

"I supposed you all knew about it, of course!

"I found she had fainted, late last night, just when there happened to be a doctor in the next cell, who had been called in for a minute to quiet down a bad case of the 'snakes.' He examined her, and said she had been shot clean through the hand, and it hadn't been dressed. He dressed it, and when she come to she began to sob and cry again, and when he questioned her, all we could make out was this: 'He didn't know me when I got to the door. I tried to save him, but it was too late! It was my letter!' "

Mrs. Barber suddenly sprang forward, with a startled exclamation, and, kneeling down, drew the pale face back upon her bosom, and softly brushed away the clustering locks. The long, silken eyelashes, still glistening with tears, were resting quietly over the lusterless eyes, from which all pain and sorrow had forever fled.

Hudson tenderly raised the limp arm so that all could see a tiny red spot showing through the cloth in the centre of the hand.

And then the crowd shuffled reluctantly out—disappointed.

Whose wife she shall be in Heaven is an old, old query. Concerning the answer given below it must be remembered that the lady was French and that the story, which has been translated by M. E. B. for ROMANCE, is told by a Frenchman, Ludovic Halevy.

HOW A WOMAN SETTLED IT.

YESTERDAY, at the church of St. Clotilde, I attended the wedding of my friend, Raoul. There was a tremendous crush, as I slipped into the aisle, just in time to hear the last words of the priest—"united in this world until you are forever united in heaven."

Raoul was not marrying a young girl, but the pretty little Countess de Charmelieu, my friend Gaston de Charmelieu's widow. Truly this charming person seemed destined to make the happiness of all of my friends—first Gaston's, and now Raoul's. On earth this was easy enough, Gaston having withdrawn in favor of Raoul; but in heaven, the definite, unending union, how was that to be arranged when there would be two, the first and second husbands?

This idea put me in a deep train of thought. This same promise must have been made five years ago to Gaston. He was told that if he lived and died a Christian he would meet his little Jeanne again, in Paradise, among the angels and archangels, to be united forever.

In the mean time a great rustling surged around me. The mass was ended. The grand organ sending forth floods of harmony, I followed the crowd which carried me into the sacristy. A foolish sentence was on the tip of my tongue, which for the life of me I could not have kept from saying to Raoul: "Did you hear? Did you grasp that sentence about the definite union? There will be two of you, man! How are you going to settle it?"

After leaving the church, I made one or two calls, walked home, took a ride in the Bois, dined at my club,

always and everywhere accompanied by that silly idea; it had taken complete possession of me—"How were Raoul and Gaston going to arrange this little matter in the next world?"

I went to bed, went to sleep, and dreamed this dream. I want you to distinctly understand.—*it is only a dream.*

* * * * * * * *

I was in Paradise at the railway station. There was a great bustle, trains coming in empty, others more or less crowded. Saint Thomas was the station master. He gave me a great deal of valuable information about the way the heavenly railway service was conducted. He told me the trains started from the Earth, made a short stop at Purgatory and Hades, and Paradise was the terminus.

"We have lots of people just now," he said. "Religion has been on the decline of late years. The Holy Father at Rome has been a little worried—yes, I may say persecuted—but it has had the effect of stirring up the lukewarm and deciding the indifferent. And now we are very well satisfied, very well satisfied, indeed! The number of passengers for Paradise has been steadily increasing for the past year; every day at the starting station on Earth they have been obliged to put on a few more coaches. The 'grippe' had certainly something to do with it, but the revival of faith a great deal more. However, you can judge for yourself;—7.10; the express train will soon be in. Yes, we have a lightning express from the Earth. Did you hear the whistle? Ah! here comes the train. We have adopted the French system. I think it the best. A rich company owns the road; its bonds are guaranteed by Heaven. Our principal lines are finished, but we are not yet in communication with all the planets. Look out! Here's the train. You see we have three styles of coaches—first, second, and third class. Now observe, there are very few persons in the second-class; they are generally used by the disciples of Voltaire and free-thinking scientists. But the third-class compensates for all. They are always crowded, jammed. Poor people are always

very good or very bad. Great crowds in the first-class, I must acknowledge; rich people have exceptional facilities for working out their salvation. Even if they give the best years of their life to Satan, they always find a few hours just before death to settle their religious affairs. The good Lord is not so severe as some people pretend. He contents himself with very little, I think. But if you remain here a few days you will see at least fifty trains come in—no doubt some acquaintances in them—and you will find a man can win his way to Paradise at a very small cost."

Saint Thomas was very garrulous;—he talked on and on and on. But for a few minutes I had not been listening to him, for there was my little widow of the church St. Clotilde, wife of Gaston and Raoul, looking out of the window of a first-class carriage. Lightly and gracefully springing to the ground, thereby showing the least bit of a charming ankle, she ran around, inquiring, "Is this Paradise? Please tell me—where is Paradise? I have my ticket." Saint Peter walked up to her and said: "Ticket, please. Be so kind as to show your ticket."

"Certainly, sir; here it is."

"Quite right; walk in—there is the entrance."

She made him a coquettish little bow and passed in.

A mad desire seized me to follow her. Perhaps Raoul is dead. Who knows? And my little widow is going to find herself between two husbands.

I asked Saint Thomas if he could manage to get me in.

"Nothing easier," he answered.

"But only for an hour or so. They won't keep me there, will they? Will I be allowed to go out again? However agreeable Paradise may be, I have still a few good years to spend on Earth. I would rather not give them up. You see, life is short, but Paradise eternal."

"Never fear; you will be allowed to go out again. Come!"

Then he presented me to Saint Peter, and said:

"This gentleman is a tourist. He merely wishes to go in for a few hours and return."

"All right; walk in, sir; happy to oblige you," replied Saint Peter.

Well, here I was in Paradise, and just in the nick of time. Gaston and Raoul had been watching the arrival of the passengers. Both made a rush for their wife. Gaston caught her right hand, and was pulling her one way, saying: "Jeanne! Jeanne! my dear wife!" Raoul had her by the left hand, pulling her the other way, exclaiming: "Martha! Martha! my dear wife!" She had two Christian names—had thought it improper to allow her second husband to call her by the same name her first husband had used. Oh, she was an admirable creature, of the most exquisite delicacy of sentiment.

However, neither Raoul nor Gaston seemed willing to give up "Jeanne" or "Martha."

"I am your first husband."

"I am your second," said Raoul.

"My rights are indisputable," said one.

"Let madam alone, sir," said the other.

"I am not addressing you, sir."

"I don't know you."

Did not know him! When on earth they had been intimate friends, almost inseparable. Raoul was always at Gaston's house, and the gossips said—but who will believe the scandal of wicked tongues?

The dispute was getting warm between the two husbands, the voices growing louder and louder. Life is very sweet in Paradise, but a trifle monotonous, and the slightest event is welcomed, like a carriage accident in a small town.

From all directions the blessed (both male and female) rushed to the spot, some taking the part of the first husband, some of the second. As for Jeanne, she stood immovable between the two. She had disengaged her hands, and paid no attention to either Raoul or Gaston.

"I should think," said I to Saint Thomas, who had accompanied me, "that such cases presented themselves very often in Paradise. Women with two husbands are very abundant on Earth."

"Quite so," he answered. "But what is new, entirely new to me, is the struggle for this wife. Generally the contention is to get rid of her."

"Well, how about two wives for one husband?"

"Oh, that's very different. There is always a contest between the wives for the husband. Women are daft on the subject of getting married, even in Paradise. But I will tell you a curious incident we had here the day Napoleon the First arrived."

"Ah! is he—Napoleon—in Paradise?" I inquired.

"Well, yes. He was kept in Purgatory a little while—you must acknowledge it was only just, after the way he treated Pius VII. at Fontainebleau. In fact, he was in Purgatory until the *coup d'etat* of 1853; when Napoleon the Third behaved so nicely to Pius IX., it was decided here that the uncle of such a man could remain in Purgatory no longer. He was then allowed to enter Paradise, and the first words he said when he arrived here were: 'Where are my two wives?'

"He was asked if he had a preference. 'Why, certainly; of course! I should like to have Josephine.' A despatch was sent to the empress—'Napoleon is here; wants you.' 'I am very sorry,' Josephine stiffly answered. 'But after what occurred in 1809, I will *never, never* return to him.' So he had to fall back on Marie Louise, who went into violent hysterics, and said, 'I never want to see Napoleon again. When I am living so happily with my dear general, don't speak to me of Napoleon. Let him take back Josephine.'

"Neither of them would be convinced, and there stood Napoleon, all alone, and not a little vexed, I assure you, when Madame de Staël stepped up—'Ah, is that Napoleon? Give him to me. I'll manage him.' And I must acknowledge they have lived very quietly together."

At that moment a great clamor from the crowd of the blessed interrupted Saint Thomas; shouts and exclamations of "The Ruler of Heaven! The Ruler of Heaven!"

It was indeed the Great Father. Hearing the dis-

pute, he had come to inquire into the matter. (A dream, only a dream. Please don't forget it.)

This Great Father was of the Italian school—a good, honest-looking Jupiter, sitting on a great dappled gray cloud, with an immense white beard, and a most admirable expression of indulgence and charity spread over his countenance. He wanted to know the cause of the uproar. Some one told him in a very few words.

"Not the slightest necessity for contention, gentlemen. Nothing is plainer. This lady is here in requital of her Christian conduct and religious sentiments on Earth. She has a right to the perfect happiness of Paradise. Let her choose between the two gentlemen."

"But," said Gaston, "how about the one who comes in second best?"

Gaston had owned race-horses on Earth. I noticed he still retained, even after death, his bad habits of speech.

"Well," said the kind Father, "I will give him one of the neglected maiden ladies who take up so much room in Paradise."

Then turning to my little countess:

"Now, madam, be quick. Don't waste any more time. Decide which one you will take."

But Jeanne stood silent and impassive between the two husbands, while Gaston and Raoul vehemently urged their respective claims, each one striving to find words that would touch the heart of their wife.

"Remember," said Gaston, "I married you when you only had a dot of three hundred thousand francs, when I might have married a girl with a million."

"You had not a penny when I married you," said Raoul. "This gentleman had squandered your money at baccarat and the race course."

"I never received your money," said Gaston. "Your father promised me a dot of three hundred thousand francs, but paid me in his South American mine shares, which after eighteen months were not worth the paper they were written on."

"I did not care a rap for the dot question," continued

Raoul. "I only wanted the prettiest and best-dressed woman in Paris—that is why I chose you, Jeanne."

"If I didn't get any dot," urged Gaston, "I never growled over your dressmaker's bills, and they were stiff. I remember a certain account amounting to seventeen thousand francs."

"I paid one of thirty thousand francs without a word," said Raoul, "and I didn't have this gentleman's income of four hundred thousand a year, either. But I was so proud of your beauty, my Jeanne, and the sensation you created."

"Your luxuries were my greatest pride," said Gaston. "What diamonds! What laces, carriages, horses and liveries you had; and your room, Jeannette, your room, in rose-colored satin—and the boxes for the theatre—I always paid three hundred francs for every first night."

"Don't speak of boxes," exclaimed Raoul. "Long before I was this lady's husband it was *I* who paid for the boxes."

"But you dined at my house five times a week, sir, and now to make such a fuss about two or three opera boxes presented to my wife. Really, such details are shameful!"

"That is my opinion," said the Jove-like Father, who was beginning to be impatient on his dappled cloud. "Be quick, gentlemen. Be quick. And you, madam, I beg you will make your decision."

Jeanne remained utterly impassive, while the two husbands continued their claims.

"Remember," said Gaston, "I gave up my career for you, sent in my resignation as captain of hussars because you would not go to Belfort."

"And I joined the Republican party for your sake," cried Raoul, "and to the great horror of my family consented to show myself at the Elysée. Just to think of me at the Elysée!"

"Come, come, no politics," exclaimed the Great Father.

"I say no politics," continued Gaston. "I have more important things to speak of. Jeanne! my dear Jeanne!

Remember I was your first love. Remember the long twilight walks we had in the woods at your father's chateau—how we rambled slowly, slowly, through the shaded alleys, your head resting on my shoulder. And then our wedding day. When we reached my house at midnight, it was bitterly cold, the country white with snow. What great fires we found in the chateau! How warm and delightfully silent! How charmingly in love we both were, and——"

"Really, sir, these souvenirs are very improper," interrupted Raoul.

"Quite possible, sir; but I must be allowed to speak of my love and confidence. My trust in her was unbounded. How many times have people come to me about you, sir, saying: 'Look out for Raoul; he is very fond of you, I grant, but there is some one else he is still fonder of—your wife.' I scorned all such insinuations."

"As for that," said Raoul, "I also evinced my confidence. Later on, after your time, sir, when *I* was the husband, these little calumnies continued. I was told to beware of Monsieur de Sericourt. Absurd! Sericourt was my best friend."

I noticed Jeanne started when Sericourt's name was mentioned, but Raoul saw nothing, and continued:

"When Sericourt was killed in the Tonquin war, when we heard the dreadful news, you gave way to the most violent and natural grief, my dear, but I received a most abominable anonymous letter. It read: 'Your wife has more tears for the friend than she would have for the husband.' I never told you of that letter, Jeanne! Suspect you? Suspect Sericourt? Never!"

"Who is this Sericourt that comes in now?" inquired the Great Father. "Is he a third husband—this Sericourt? I am getting quite confused."

"One word, Good Father," cried Raoul, "only one word, but a decisive one. The day I married this lady at Saint Clotilde's, the priest, a most excellent man, promised me that our temporary union on Earth would be followed by a definite, eternal union in Heaven."

"And I," exclaimed Gaston, "on my wedding day at the Madeleine, a bishop—not a priest, but a bishop—made me the same promise, in the same words."

"Really, this is getting embarrassing," murmured the Father, "very embarrassing. My representatives on Earth act very thoughtlessly sometimes. But you, madam, say nothing. Why don't you speak out? It is your privilege to decide."

And the little widow, blushing and trembling, said:

"Dear Father, if you would be so infinitely kind, and allow me to go to Monsieur de Sericourt, who is over there on that little cloud behind you. He has been making signs and beckoning to me for the last half-hour."

I turned around; sure enough, there was Sericourt on his little cloud, indulging in the most tender and expressive pantomime. Sericourt was another one of my friends. Truly this charming woman seemed called upon to contribute to the happiness of my friends, in Eternity as well as in this world.

"Why didn't you speak sooner?" said the kind Father. "This expedites matters considerably. All I desire is your perfect happiness in Paradise, as a reward for your Christian and faithful conduct on Earth."

* * * * * * * *

At this I woke up with a sudden start, so extraordinary did this speech of the Great Father seem to me, and found it all a dream.

This chapter out of the lives of a few people in an English seafaring village was written by Thomas Hardy for the New York *Herald*. It is a perfectly simple story, yet it deals with large subjects; woman's love, jealousy, covetousness, the haste to get rich, suffering and bereavement, and is a romance of unmistakable pathos.

TO PLEASE HIS WIFE.

I.

THE interior of St. James's Church in Havenpool town was slowly darkening under the close clouds of a winter afternoon. It was Sunday; service had just ended; the face of the parson in the pulpit was buried in his hands, and the congregation, with a cheerful sigh of release, were rising from their knees to depart.

For the moment the stillness was so complete that the surging of the sea could be heard outside the harbor bar. Then it was broken by the footsteps of the clerk going toward the west door to open it in the usual manner for the exit of the assembly. Before, however, he had reached the doorway the latch was lifted from without, and the dark figure of a man in a sailor's garb appeared against the light.

The clerk stepped aside, the sailor closed the door gently behind him and advanced up the nave till he stood at the chancel step. The parson looked up from the private little prayer which, after so many for the parish, he quite fairly takes for himself, rose to his feet, and stared at the intruder.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said the sailor, addressing the minister in a voice distinctly audible to all the congregation. "I have come here to offer thanks for my narrow escape from shipwreck. I am given to understand that it is a proper thing to do, if you have no objection."

The parson, after a moment's pause, said, hesitatingly, "I have no objection, certainly. It is usual to

mention any such wish before service, so that the proper words may be used in the general thanksgiving. But, if you wish, we can read from the form for use after a storm at sea."

"Ay, sure; I ain't particular," said the sailor.

The clerk thereupon directed the sailor to the page in the prayer-book where the collect of thanksgiving would be found, and the rector began reading it, the sailor kneeling where he stood and repeating it after him word by word in a distinct voice. The people, who had remained agape and motionless at the proceeding, mechanically knelt down likewise, but they continued to regard the isolated form of the sailor, who, in the precise middle of the chancel step, remained fixed on his knees, facing the east, his hands joined and quite unconscious of his appearance in their regard.

When the thanksgiving had come to an end he arose; the people rose also, and all went out of church together. As soon as the sailor emerged so that the remaining daylight fell upon his face, old inhabitants began to recognize him as no other than Shadrach Jolliffe, a young man who had not been seen at Havenpool for several years. A son of the town, his parents had died when he was quite young, on which account he had gone to sea early in the Newfoundland trade.

He talked with this and that townsman as he walked, informing them that since leaving his native place years before he had become captain and owner of a small coasting ketch, which had providentially been saved from the gale as well as himself. Presently he drew near to two girls who were leaving the churchyard in front of him; they had been sitting in the nave at his entry and had watched his doings with deep interest, afterward discussing him as they moved out of church together. One was a slight and gentle creature; the other a tall, large-framed, deliberate girl. Captain Jolliffe regarded the loose curls of their hair, their backs and shoulders, down to their heels, for some time.

"Who may those maids be?" he whispered to his neighbor.

"The little one is Emily Hanning; the tall one Joanna Phippard."

"Ah, I recollect 'em now, to be sure." He advanced to their elbow and genially stole a gaze at them.

"Emily, you don't know me," said the sailor, turning his beaming brown eyes on her.

"I think I do, Mr. Jolliffe," said Emiy, shyly.

The other girl looked straight at him with her dark eyes. "The face of your mate I don't call to mind so well," he continued. "But I know her beginnings and kindred."

They walked and talked together, Jolliffe narrating particulars of his late narrow escape, till they reached the corner of Sloop lane, in which Emily Hanning dwelt, when, with a nod and a smile she left them. Soon the sailor parted also from Joanna, and having no especial errand or appointment, turned back toward Emily's house.

She lived with her father, who called himself an accountant, the daughter, however, keeping a little stationery shop as a supplemental provision for the gaps of his somewhat uncertain business. On entering, Jolliffe found father and daughter about to begin tea.

"Oh, I didn't know it was tea time," he said. "Ay, I'll have a cup with much pleasure."

He remained to tea and long afterward, telling more tales of his seafaring life; several neighbors called to listen, and were asked to come in. Somehow, Emily Hanning lost her heart to the sailor that Sunday night, and in the course of a week or two there was a tender understanding between them.

One moonlight evening in the next month, Shadrach was ascending out of the town by the long, straight road eastward, to an elevated suburb where the more fashionable houses stood—if anything near this ancient port could be called fashionable—when he saw a figure before him whom, from her manner of glancing back, he took to be Emily. But on coming up he found she was Joanna Phippard. He gave a gallant greeting and walked beside her.

"Go along," she said, "or Emily will be jealous."

He seemed not to like the suggestion, and remained.

What was said and what was done on that walk never was clearly recollected by Shadrach, but in some way or other Joanna contrived to wean him away from her gentler and younger rival. From that week onward Jolliffe was seen more and more in the wake of Joanna Phippard and less in the company of Emily, and it was soon rumored about the quay that old Jolliffe's son who had come home from the sea was going to be married to the former young woman, to the great disappointment of the latter.

Just after this report had gone about, Joanna dressed herself for a walk one evening and started for Emily's house in the little cross street. Intelligence of the deep sorrow of her friend on account of the loss of Shadrach had reached her ears also, and her conscience reproached her for winning him away.

Joanna was not altogether satisfied with the sailor. She liked his attentions, and she coveted the dignity of matrimony; but she had never been deeply in love with Jolliffe. For one thing she was ambitious, and socially his position was hardly so good as her own; while there was always the chance of an attractive woman mating considerably above her. It had long been in her mind that she would not strongly object to give him back again to Emily if her friend felt so very badly about him. To this end she had penned a letter of renunciation to Shadrach, which letter she carried in her hand, intending to post it if personal observation of Emily convinced her that her friend was suffering.

Joanna entered Sloop lane and stepped down into the stationery shop, which was below the pavement level. Emily's father was never at home at this hour of the day, and it seemed as though Emily was not at home either, for the visitor could make nobody hear Customers came so seldom hither that a five minutes' absence of the proprietor counted for little Joanna waited in the little shop where Emily had tastefully set out, as women can, articles in themselves of slight

value, so as to obscure the meagreness of the stock in trade, till she saw a figure pausing outside the window, apparently absorbed in the contemplation of the six-penny books, packets of paper and prints hung on a string. It was Captain Shadrach Jolliffe peering in to ascertain if Emily were there alone. Moved by an impulse of reluctance to meet him in a spot which breathed of Emily, she slipped through the door that communicated with the parlor at the back. Joanna had frequently done so before, for in her friendship with Emily she had the freedom of the house without ceremony.

Jolliffe entered the shop. Through the thin blind which screened the glass partition she could see that he was diasappointed at not finding Emily there. He was about to go out again when her form darkened the doorway, hastening back from some errand. At sight of Jolliffe she started back as if she would have gone out again.

"Don't run away, Emily; don't!" said he. "What can make ye afraid?"

"I'm not afraid, Captain Jolliffe. Only—only I saw you all of a sudden and—it made me jump." The voice showed that her heart had jumped even more than the rest of her.

"I just called, as I was passing," he said.

"For some paper?" She hastened behind the counter.

"No, no, Emily. Why do ye get behind there? Why not stay by me? You seem to hate me."

"I don't hate you, how can I?"

"Then come out, so that we can talk like Christians." Emily obeyed with a fitful laugh, till she stood again beside him in the open part of the shop.

"There's a dear!" he said.

"You mustn't say that, Captain Jolliffe, because the words belong to somebody else."

"Oh, I know what you mean. But, Emily, upon my life, I didn't know till this morning that you cared one bit about me, or I shouldn't have done as I have done.

I have the best of feelings for Joanna, but I know that from the beginning she hasn't cared for me more than in a friendly way, and I see now the one I ought to have asked to be my wife. You know, Emily, when a man comes home from sea after a long voyage he's as blind as a bat—he can't see who's who in woman. They are all alike to him—beautiful creatures—and he takes the first that comes easy, without thinking if she loves him or if he might not soon love another better than she. From the first I inclined to you most, but you were so backward and shy that I thought you didn't want me to bother 'ee, and so I went to Joanna."

"Don't say any more, Mr. Jolliffe, don't!" said she, choking. "You are going to marry Joanna next month, and it is wrong to—to—"

"Oh, Emily, my darling!" he cried, and clasped her little figure in his arms before she was aware. Joanna behind the curtain turned pale, tried to withdraw her eyes, but could not. "It is only you I love as a man ought to love the woman he is going to marry; and I know this from what Joanna has said—that she will willingly let me off. She wants to marry higher, I know, and only said 'Yes' to me out of kindness. A fine tall girl like her isn't the sort for a plain sailor's wife; you be the best suited for that."

He kissed her, and kissed her again, her flexible form quivering in the agitation of his embrace. "I wonder —are you sure—Joanna is going to break off with you? Oh, are you sure? Because—"

"I know she would not wish to make us miserable. She will release me."

"Oh, I hope, I hope she will! Don't stay any longer, Captain Jolliffe."

He lingered, however, till a customer came for a penny stick of sealing-wax, and then he withdrew.

Green envy had overspread Joanna at the scene. She looked about for a way of escape. To get out without Emily's knowledge of her visit was indispensable. She crept from the parlor into the passage, and

thence to the front door of the house, where she let herself noiselessly into the street.

The sight of that caress had reversed all her resolutions. She could not let Shadrach go. Reaching home, she burned the letter and told her mother that if Captain Jolliffe called she was too unwell to see him.

Shadrach, however, did not call. He sent her a note expressing in simple language the state of his feelings and asking to be allowed to take advantage of the hints she had given him that her affection, too, was little more than friendly, by cancelling the engagement.

Looking out upon the harbor and the island beyond he waited and waited in his lodgings for an answer that did not come. The suspense grew to be so intolerable that after dark he went up the High street. He could not resist calling at Joanna's to hear his fate.

Her mother said her daughter was too unwell to see him, and to his questioning admitted that it was in consequence of a letter received from himself, which had distressed her deeply.

"You know what it was about, perhaps, Mrs. Phippard?" he said.

Mrs. Phippard owned that she did, adding that it put them in a very painful position.. Thereupon Shadrach, fearing, that he had been guilty of an enormity, explained that if his letter had pained Joanna it must be owing to a misunderstanding, since he had thought it would be a relief to her. If otherwise, he would hold himself bound by his word, and she was to think of the letter as never having been written.

Next morning he received an oral message from her, asking him to fetch her home from a meeting that evening. This he did, and while walking from the Town Hall to her door with her hand in his arm she said:—

"It is all the same as before between us, isn't it, Shadrach? Your letter was sent in mistake?"

"It is all the same as before," he answered, "if you say it must be."

"I wish it to be," she murmured with hard lineaments, as she thought of Emily.

Shadrach was a religious and scrupulous man, who respected his word as his life. Shortly afterward the wedding took place, Jolliffe having conveyed to Emily as gently as possible the error he had fallen into when estimating Joanna's mood as one of indifference.

II.

A MONTH after the marriage Joanna's mother died, and the couple were obliged to turn their attention to very practical matters. Now that she was left without a parent, Joanna could not bear the notion of her husband going to sea again; but the question was, what could he do at home? They finally decided to buy a grocer's shop in High street, the good-will and stock of which were waiting to be disposed of at that time. Shadrach knew nothing of shop-keeping and Joanna very little, but they hoped to learn.

To the management of this grocery business they now devoted all their energies, and continued to conduct it for many succeeding years without great success. Two sons were born to them, whom their mother loved to idolatry, although she had never passionately loved her husband, and she lavished upon them all her forethought and care. But the shop did not thrive, and the large dreams she had entertained of her sons' education and career became attenuated in the face of realities. Their schooling was of the plainest, but, living by the sea, they grew alert in all such nautical arts and enterprises as were attractive to their age.

The great interest of the Jolliffes' married life outside their own immediate household had lain in the marriage of Emily. By one of those odd chances which lead those that lurk in unsuspected corners to be discovered while the obvious are passed by, the gentle girl had been seen and loved by a thriving merchant of the town, a widower, some years older than herself, though still in the prime of life. At first Emily had declared that she never, never could marry any one, but Mr. Lester had quietly persevered, and had at last won her reluctant assent. Two children also

were the fruits of this union, and as they grew and prospered, Emily declared that she had never supposed she could live to be so happy.

The worthy merchant's house—one of those large substantial brick mansions frequently jammed up in old-fashioned towns—faced directly on the High street, nearly opposite to the grocery shop of the Jolliffes, and it now became the pain of Joanna to behold the woman whose place she had usurped out of pure covetousness looking down from her position of comparative wealth upon the humble shop window, with its dusty sugar loaves, heaps of raisins and canisters of tea, over which it was her own lot to preside. The business having so dwindled, Joanna was obliged to serve in the shop herself, and it galled and mortified her that Emily Lester, sitting in her large drawing room over the way, could witness her own dancings up and down behind the counter at the beck and call of wretched twopenny customers, whose patronage she was driven to welcome gladly—persons to whom she was compelled to be civil in the street—while Emily was bounding along with her governess and conversing with the genteelest people of the town and neighborhood. This was what she had gained by not letting Shadrach Jolliffe, whom she had so faintly loved, carry his affections elsewhere.

Shadrach was a good and honest man, and he had been faithful to her in heart and in deed. Time had clipped the wings of his love for Emily in his devotion to the mother of his boys; he had quite lived down that impulsive earlier fancy, and Emily had become in his regard nothing more than a friend. It was the same with Emily's feeling for him. Possibly had she found the least cause for jealousy, Joanna would almost have been better satisfied. It was in the absolute acquiescence of Emily and Shadrach in the results she herself had contrived that her discontent found nourishment.

Shadrach was not endowed with the narrow shrewdness necessary for developing a retail business in the face of many competitors. Did a customer inquire if the grocer could really recommend the wondrous sub-

stitute for eggs which a persevering drummer had forced into his stock, he would answer that when you did not put eggs into pudding it was difficult to taste them there; and when he was asked if his "real mocha coffee" was real mocha, he would say grimly, "As understood in small shops."

One summer day, when the big brick house opposite was reflecting the oppressive sun's heat into the shop, and nobody was present but husband and wife, Joanna looked across at Emily's door, where a carriage had drawn up. Traces of patronage had been visible in Emily's manner of late.

"Shadrach, the truth is, you are not a business man," his wife sadly murmured. "You were not brought up to shopkeeping, and it is impossible for a man to make a fortune at an occupation he has jumped into, as you did into this."

Jolliffe agreed with her in this as in everything. "Not that I care a rope's end about making a fortune," he said cheerfully. "I am happy enough, and we can rub on somehow."

She looked again at the great house through the screen of bottled pickles. "Rub on—yes," she said, bitterly. "But see how well off Emily Lester is, who used to be so poor. Her boys will go to college, no doubt; and think of ours—obliged to go to the national school."

Shadrach's thoughts had flown to Emily. "Nobody," he said, good-humoredly, "ever did Emily a better turn than you did, Joanna, when you warned her off me, and put an end to that little simpering nonsense between us, so as to leave it in her power to say aye to Lester when he came along."

This almost maddened her. "Don't speak of bygones!" she implored, in stern sadness. "But think, for the boys' and my sake, if not for your own, what are we to do to get richer?"

"Well," he said, becoming serious, "to tell the truth, I have always felt myself unfit for this business, though I've never liked to say so. I seem to want more room

for sprawling, a more open space to strike out in than here among friends and neighbors. I could get rich as well as any man, if I tried my own way."

"I wish you would. What is your way?"

"To go to sea again."

She had been the very one to keep him at home, hating the semi-widowed existence of sailors' wives. But her ambition checked her instincts now, and she said, "Do you think success really lies that way?"

"I am sure it lies in no other."

"Do you want to go, Shadrach?"

"Not for the pleasure of it, I can tell 'ee. There's no pleasure at sea, Joanna, as I can find in my back parlor here. To speak honest, I have no love for the brine. I never had much. But if it comes to a question of a fortune for you and the lads, it is another thing. That's the only way to it for one born and bred a seafarer as I."

"Would it take long to earn?"

"Well, that depends. Perhaps not."

The next morning Shadrach pulled from a chest of drawers the nautical jacket he had worn during the first months of his return, brushed out the moths, donned it, and walked down to the quay. The port still did a fair business in the Newfoundland trade, though not so much as formerly.

It was not long after this that he invested all he possessed in purchasing a part ownership in a brig, of which he was appointed captain. A few months were passed in coast trading, during which interval Shadrach wore off the landrust that had accumulated upon him in his grocery phase, and in the spring the brig sailed for Newfoundland.

Joanna lived on at home with her sons, who were now growing up into strong lads, and occupying themselves in various ways about the harbor and quay.

"Never mind, let them work a little," their fond mother said to herself. "Our necessities compel it now. But when Shadrach comes home they will be only seventeen and eighteen, and they shall be re-

moved from the port and their education thoroughly taken in hand by a tutor; and they will perhaps be as near to gentlemen as Emmy Lester's precious two with their algebra and their Latin."

The date for Shadrach's return drew near and arrived, and he did not appear. Joanna was assured that there was no cause for anxiety, sailing ships being so uncertain in their coming, which assurance proved to be well grounded, for late one wet evening, about a month after the calculated time, the ship was announced as at hand, and presently the slipslop step of Shadrach as the sailor sounded in the passage, and he entered. The boys had gone out and had missed him, and Joanna was sitting alone.

As soon as the first emotion of reunion between the couple had passed Jolliffe explained the delay as owing to a small speculative contract which had produced good results. "I was determined not to disappoint 'ee," he said; "and I think you'll own that I haven't."

With this he pulled out an enormous canvas bag, full and rotund as the money bag of the giant whom Jack slew, untied it and shook the contents out into her lap as she sat in her low chair by the fire. A mass of guineas) there were guineas on the earth in those days) fell into her lap with a sudden thud, weighing down her gown to the floor.

"There!" said Shadrach, complacently. "I told 'ee, dear, I'd do it; and have I done it or no?"

Somehow her face, after the first excitement of possession, did not retain its glory. "It is a lot of gold, indeed," she said. "And—is this all?"

"All? Why, dear Joanna, do you know you can count to three hundred in that heap? It is a fortune!"

"Yes, yes. A fortune—judged by the sea. But judged by land"—

However, she banished considerations of the money for the nonce. Soon the boys came in, and next Sunday Shadrach returned thanks—this time by the more ordinary channel of the italics in the General Thanksgiving. But a few days after, when the question of

investing the money arose, he remarked that she did not seem so satisfied as he had hoped.

"Well, you see, Shadrach," she answered, "we count by hundreds. They count by thousands" (nodding toward the other side of the street). "They have set up a carriage and pair since you left."

"Oh, have they?"

"My dear Shadrach, you don't know how the world moves! However, we'll do the best we can with it. But they are rich and we are poor still." She moved sadly about the house and shop, and the boys were still occupying themselves at the harbor. "Joanna," he said one day, "I see by your movements that it is not enough."

"It is not enough," said she. "My boys will have to live by steering the ships that the Lesters own—and I was once above her!" Jolliffe was not an argumentative man, and he only murmured that he thought he would take another voyage. He meditated for several days, and coming home from the quay one afternoon said suddenly:—

"I could do it for 'ee, dear, in one more trip, for certain, if—if"—

"Do what, Shadrach?"

"Enable 'ee to count by thousands instead of hundreds!"

"If what?"

"If I might take the boys."

She turned pale. "Don't say that, Shadrach!" she answered, hastily.

"Why?"

"I don't like to hear it. There's danger at sea. I want 'em to be something genteel, and no danger to them. I couldn't let them risk their lives at sea. Oh, I couldn't, ever—ever!"

"Very well, dear. It shan't be done."

Next day, after a silence, she asked a question. "If they were to go with you, it would make a great deal of difference, I suppose, to the profit?"

"'Twould treble what I should get from the venture

single handed. Under my eye they would be as good as two more of myself."

Later on she said, "Tell me more about this."

"Well, the boys are almost as clever as master mariners in handling a craft, upon my life. There isn't a more cranky place in the South Seas than about the sand banks of this harbor, and they've practised here from their infancy. And they are so steady; I couldn't get their steadiness and trustworthiness in half a dozen men twice their age."

"And is it—very dangerous at sea? Now, too, there are rumors of war?" she asked, uneasily.

"Oh, well, there be risks. Still"—

The idea grew and magnified, and the mother's heart was crushed and stifled by it. Emily was growing too patronizing; it would not be borne. Shadrach's wife could not help nagging him about their comparative poverty. The young men, amiable as their father, when spoken to on the subject of a voyage of enterprise were quite willing to embark, and though they, like their father, had no great love for the sea, they became quite enthusiastic when the proposal was detailed.

Everything now hung upon their mother's assent. She withheld it long, but at last gave the word—the young men might accompany their father. Shadrach was unusually cheerful about it. God would not forsake those who were faithful to Him.

All that the Jolliffes possessed in the world was put into the enterprise. The grocery stock was pared down to the least that possibly could afford a bare sustenance to Joanna during the absence, which was to last through the usual Newfoundland "spell." How she would endure the weary time she hardly knew, for the boys had been with her formerly; but she nerved herself for the trial.

The ship was laden with boots and shoes, ready-made clothing, fishing tackle, butter, cheese, cordage, sailcloth, and many other commodities, and was to bring back oil, furs, skins, fish, cranberries, and what else

came to hand. But much trading to other ports was to be undertaken between the voyages out and homeward, and thereby much money made.

III.

THE brig sailed on a Monday morning in spring, but Joanna did not witness its departure. She could not bear the sight that she had been the means of bringing about. Knowing this, her husband told her overnight that they were to sail some time before noon the next day; hence, when, awaking at five the next morning, she heard them bustling about downstairs, she did not hasten to descend, but lay trying to nerve herself for the parting, imagining they would leave about nine, as her husband had done on his previous voyage. When she did descend she beheld words chalked upon the sloping face of the bureau, but no husband or sons. In the hastily scrawled lines Shadrach said they had gone off thus not to pain her by a leave-taking; and the sons had chalked under: "Good-by, mother."

She rushed to the quay and looked down the harbor toward the blue rim of the sea, but she could only see the masts and bulging sails of the Joanna—no human figures. "'Tis I have sent them!" she said, wildly, and burst into tears.

In the house the chalked good-bys nearly broke her heart. But when she had re-entered the front room and looked across at Emily's, a gleam of triumph lit her thin face at her anticipated release from the thraldom of subservience.

To do Emily Lester justice, her assumption of superiority was mainly a figment of Joanna's brain. That the circumstances of the merchant's wife were more luxurious than Joanna's, the former could not conceal, though whenever the two met, which was not very often now, Emily endeavored to subdue the difference by every means in her power.

The first summer lapsed away; and Joanna meagrely maintained herself by the shop, which now consisted of little more than a window and a counter. Emily was,

in truth, her only large customer; and Mrs. Lester's kindly readiness to buy anything and everything without questioning its quality had a sting of bitterness in it, for it was the uncritical attitude of a patron and almost of a donor. The long, dreary winter moved on; the face of the bureau had been turned to the wall to protect the chalked words of farewell, for she could never bring herself to rub them out, and she often glanced at them with wet eyes. Emily's handsome boys came home for the Christmas holidays, and still Joanna subsisted, as it were, with held breath, like a person submerged. Only one summer more and the spell would end. Toward the end of the time Emily called on her quondam friend. She had heard that Joanna began to feel anxious; she had received no letter from husband or sons for some months. Emily's silks rustled arrogantly when, in response to Joanna's almost dumb invitation, she squeezed through the opening of the counter and into the parlor behind the shop.

"You are all success, and I am all the other way!" said Joanna.

"But why do you think so?" said Emily. "They are to bring back a fortune, I hear."

"Ah! will they come? The doubt is more than a woman can bear. All three in one ship — think of that! And I have not heard of them for months!"

"But the time is not up. You should not meet misfortune half way."

"Nothing will repay me for the grief of their absence!"

"Then why did you let them go? You were doing fairly well."

"I made them go!" she said, turning vehemently upon Emily. "And I'll tell you why! I could not bear that we should be only muddling on, and you rich and thriving. Now I have told you and you may hate me if you will!"

"I shall never hate you, Joanna."

And she proved the truth of her words afterward.

The end of autumn came and the brig should have been in port, but nothing like the Joanna appeared in the channel between the sands. It was now really time to be uneasy. Joanna Jolliffe sat by the fire, and every gust of wind caused her a cold thrill. She hadalways feared and detested the sea—to her it was a treacherous, restless, slimy creature, glorying in the grief of women.

"Still," she said, "they must come!"

She recalled to her mind that Shadrach had said before starting that if they returned safe and sound, with success crowning their enterprise, he would go as he had gone after his shipwreck and kneel with his sons in the church and offer sincere thanks for their deliverance. She went to church regularly morning and afternoon, and sat in the most forward pew, nearest the chancel step. Her eyes were mostly fixed on that step where Shadrach had knelt in the bloom of his young manhood—she knew to an inch the spot which his knees had pressed twenty winters before, his outline as he had knelt, his hat on the step beside him. God was good. Surely her husband must kneel there again, a son on each side, as he had said—George just here, Jim just there! By long watching the spot, as she worshipped, it became as if she saw the three returned ones there kneeling—the two slim outlines of her boys, the more bulky form between them—their hands clasped, their heads shaped against the eastern wall. The fancy grew almost to an hallucination; she could never turn her worn eyes to the step without seeing them there.

Nevertheless, they did not come. Heaven was merciful, but it was not yet pleased to relieve her soul. This was her purgation for the sin of making them the slaves of her ambition. But it became more than purgation soon, and her mood approached despair. The brig had been due for months, but it had not returned.

Joanna was always hearing or seeing evidences of their arrival. When, on the hill behind the port, whence a view of the open channel could be obtained, she felt sure that a little speck on the horizon, break-

ing the eternally level waste of waters southward, was the track of the Joanna's mainmast. Or, when indoors, a shout of excitement of any kind at the corner by the Town Cellar, where the High street joined the quay, caused her to spring to her feet and cry, "'Tis they!"

But it was not. The visionary forms knelt every Sunday afternoon on the chancel step but not the real. Her shop had, as it were, eaten itself hollow. In the apathy which had resulted from her loneliness and grief she had ceased to take in the smallest supplies, and thus had sent away her last customer.

In this strait Emily Lester tried by every means in her power to aid the afflicted woman; but she met with constant repulses. "I don't like you—I can't bear to see you!" Joanna would whisper hoarsely when Emily came to her and made advances.

"But I want to help and soothe you, Joanna," Emily would say.

"You are a lady, with a rich husband and fine sons. What can you want with a bereaved crone like me?"

"Joanna, I want this. I want you to come and live in my house and not stay alone in this dismal place any longer."

"And suppose they come and don't find me at home? You wish to separate me and mine! No, I'll stay here! I don't like you, and I can't thank you, whatever kindness you do me."

However, as time went on Joanna could not afford to pay the rent of the shop and house without an income. She was convinced that all hope of the return of Shadrach and his sons was vain, and she reluctantly consented to accept the asylum of the Lesters' house. Here she was allotted a room of her own on the second floor, and went and came as she chose, without contact with the family. Her hair grayed and whitened, deep lines channelled her forehead, and her form grew gaunt and stooping. But she still expected the lost ones; and when she met Emily on the staircase she would say, morosely, "I know why you've got me here! They'll come and be disappointed at not finding me at home,

and perhaps go away again; and then you'll be revenged for my taking Shadrach away from 'ee."

Emily Lester bore these reproaches from the grief-stricken soul. She was sure—all the people of Havenpool were sure—that Shadrach and his sons would not return. For years the vessel had been given up as lost. Nevertheless, when awakened at night by any noise, Joanna would rise from bed and glance at the shop opposite by the light from flickering lamp to make sure it was not they.

It was a damp and dark December night six years after the departure of the brig Joanna. The wind was from the sea, and brought up a fishy mist which mopped the face like moist flannel. Joanna had prayed her usual prayer for the absent ones with more fervor and confidence than she had felt for months, and had fallen asleep about eleven. It must have been between one and two when she suddenly started up. She had certainly heard steps in the street and the voice of Shadrach and her sons calling at the door of the grocery shop. She sprang out of bed, and hardly knowing what clothing she dragged upon herself, hastened down Emily's large and carpeted staircase, put the candle on the hall table, unfastened the bolts and chain, and stepped into the street. The mist blowing up the street from the quay hindered her seeing the shop, although it was so near; but she had crossed to it in a moment. How was it? Nobody stood there. The wretched woman walked wildly up and down with her bare feet; there was not a soul. She returned and knocked with all her might at the door which had once been her own; they might have been admitted for the night, unwilling to disturb her till the morning. It was not till several minuites had elapsed that the young man who now kept the shop looked out of an upper window, and saw something human standing below half dressed.

"Has anybody arrived?" cried the form.

"Oh, Mrs. Jolliffe, I didn't know it was you."said the young man kindly, for he was aware how her baseless expectations moved her. "No; nobody has come!"

Most people think that the theory of transmigration of souls is a mystical doctrine held by people who have time to amuse themselves by thinking about it. It has been left for a wide awake New York reporter to discover its concrete practical value as Fred A. Wilson has done in the *Evening Sun.*

THE SOUL OF THE CAT.

YEE SAM LING was a lonely one. He had friends of course in plenty, and relatives too, for that matter, but Ling had his own views on matrimony, and he didn't believe anybody could be happy without a wife. It was strange why he should have suddenly taken on that belief, for hadn't he lived fifteen years away from his own Flowery Land! Of course he had.

He came first to the Golden Hills and went to work in the mines, but he couldn't stand it, for he used to feel the strange white devils at night punching him in the back. So he gave his claim in the Golden Hills to a relative, and travelled across the continent to New York, curled up like a mink on a seat of the smoking-car.

He was idle for a while and then he started in to sell soap to the laundrymen, until, finally, he got enough of the American man's cash to rent a store. He put out his red sign, with the fluttering red streamers on it to keep the evil ones away, and he became a merchant. Every night for years he had crawled into his little bunk curtained off at the back of the store, and after comforting himself with the opium he loved so well he had fallen asleep, to dream of pretty Chinese girls tottering on pink clouds across the water and stretching their arms out to him.

He often thought of China and the home life there, and he used to count the money in his trunk and wonder when he would have enough to go back and buy a koon-foo's rank and wear a cap with the red button of the third degree. Then he thought he would buy with

some of his money the prettiest girl in the province, and she would have feet so small that she couldn't walk at all unless she had a strong servant holding each hand.

He often played the lottery in the hope that he would win, and he burned prayer sticks before his kat god that he might have luck, but he might just as well have saved the sticks, for luck never came. So persistently did he lose, that more than once he was tempted to let one of the burning prayer sticks fall over against the god and burn it, but he was afraid lest the deceit should be discovered and the god seek a just revenge.

One day there came into his store a white girl who lived on the top floor of the tenement around the corner. She had hair like the wong-shik gold he used to dig out of the Golden Hills.

"Say, John," she said, "me mother's run out o' sope, an' she's up to her neck in washin'. Gimme a bar!"

Ling was smitten with a great love. He remembered having seen this girl go past his store many times, but he never had such a chance as this to speak to her.

"You mommee want sope?" he asked. "She washee?"

"Yes; I want er bar, an' I want it quick."

"Alle lite," said Ling, and he clattered behind the narrow counter and pulled out from a shelf two bars of soap.

"You takkee two," he said. "No n'gant'sin, you takkee: you sabe?" and he pushed the soap and the five pennies she had laid down away from him. Then he went on: "I lakkee you; you heap nice! Lat you name?"

"Gee, what graft!" said the girl; "so I get de sope for nuttin, do I, John? Well, me name's Maggie Sullivan, if yer wanter know."

Ling looked at her with admiring eyes. Then he pointed to the soap and pennies and said, simply:

"You takkee. I heap lakkee you, sabe? You clum 'glain?"

"Yes, I sabe, John," said the girl, "an' I'll come again."

So she went out, and Ling went to the door and looked after her until she had disappeared around the corner. Then he went back behind the narrow counter and sat down on a stool. He rested his elbows on a pile of paper, sunk his chin in his hands, and thought very hard. His thinking amounted to something, for he went to the little cubby room curtained off at the back of the store, and out of the big camphor-wood chest he pulled some carefully folded clothes. He was a new man when he came out into the store again, and a couple of his countrymen who had dropped in to have a friendly chat and a smoke began to chaff him.

His old cloth blouse, with the shiny place on the back where his well-oiled queue had hung, lay in a heap on the floor with his old pow-tail and coarse trousers; instead he wore clothes of brocaded dark blue silk, and his sandals were like those of a koon-foo. A cold wind was blowing up the street. It made him shiver, but he stood his ground and watched for the coming of Maggie Sullivan.

Every day for a week he watched, until on the eighth day he saw her running by with a shawl over her head and a pitcher in her hand. "Hi-lo," he cried, "hi-lo, Maggie S'l'm'n'! you com' ni-chue?"

"Hello, John; how's things? I'll see yer when I get th' old man's beer," and she dashed on, while Ling went in and waited.

After a while she came in with a rush.

"You lakkee China candy?" began Ling before she could say anything. Heap good!" and he shoved a queer little box full of keung toward her. "I lakkee you," he continued, while he picked at the gilt buttons on his blouse. "I bling you nice cl'ose, heap nice, you sabe? Makkee you nice cl'ose, you dless heap nice, sabe? You mally me, you hab heap money."

"Marry you, John? Well, I guess not! Me old woman would pull the pig-tail out of your head if she heard you makin' any breaks like that."

"You mally me bimeby," said Ling, as though he felt sure he would win.

"So long, John!" she said, as she went out munching the candy. That was the first of the queer courtship. It struck Maggie seriously, as though she thought she might do worse.

"I don't know but what I'll marry the Chink," she said to herself. "I'll get all ther clothes an' money I want, an' I'll be boss, you can bet!"

There was a cat which used to sleep under Ling's counter. She grew fat on the scraps of chow-chop-suey and chue-yuuk which fell from the table, and altogether lived a life of peace. But the day Ling proposed to Maggie Sullivan the cat's manner changed. Instead of sleeping under the counter all the day, she took to walking on the counter, mewing uneasily in a wailing voice, which filled the room with a distressful sound.

Then she would pause in her walk, and sitting on her haunches, glare at Ling with staring eyes. Once or twice he drove her away, but she came back and glared until her eyes turned from green to purple. Once he struck her with his bamboo t'ung, and she retreated to a high shelf and watched him.

"The evil one possesses her," said Ling, and he burned more prayer sticks before his kashat Joss, but the wailing of the cat never ceased. She crept under Ling's bed that night and scratched at the matting on the floor; she paraded the little room, and her big shining eyes seemed to light up the dark place. From that night the cat was never at rest, and Ling became so stricken with a silent terror that he would go out into the street rather than cross her path.

He forgot about the cat a couple of days later, when Maggie Sullivan came in. She was better dressed than usual.

"Hello, John," she began, "I had a row with the old woman, and I've clim out. I'm dead sick of gittin' jumped on. Now, if you want'er marry me on ther square, I'm with you, but I don't want any funny business in mine!"

"You mally me?" asked Ling, while a smile crept over his face. "Allee lite, I mally you."

"But I'll tell you, John," the girl went on, "you've got to cut that pig-tail off and wear citizen's clothes. You got to be pretty near a white man. You got to be as white as clothes kin make you, an' you got to treat me white, too, or I'll shake you!"

Ling didn't want to lose his queue, and he fought against what he considered a sacrilege, but he found Maggie relentless.

"I curl him up so," he said as he twisted it about his head, "'n I puttee on hlat, so," and he pulled an old slouch hat down over his head, "'n noblody slee hlim, ha?"

No, even that wouldn't do, and Maggie went away saying: "I'm goin' up to a lady friend's o' mine ter stay ter-nite, John, an' I'll see you to-morrer, an' if ther pig-tail don't go I don't git married, see?"

Ling didn't quite see, but he thought a lot. He thought Maggie was the prettiest girl he had ever seen. There was nothing ch'an about her. She had fine blue eyes, a trim figure and a shock of golden hair that attracted the Chinaman. The old cat jumped on the counter and yowled and stared at him, and he went out to get away from those green eyes. He went to the Joss house and burned thirty cents' worth of prayer sticks and paper. He made up his mind quickly after that, almost ran down the dark, creaking steps and across the way to where the tai'-tau'-lo lived and did business.

"Take off this thing!" he said when he sat down on the stool in front of the little razors and scissors.

"What!" said the barber, "are you crazy, or have the foreign devils got you too?"

"Cut it off, I tell you! Are you not here to do such work as this?"

"No, that is wrong. I knew your mother. What would she say if I did it? Her curses would come to me as well as to you, unworthy son."

Ling ran out while his courage lasted. He went to a Kwang-tung man who lived near Pell street and had no queue.

"Cut this thing off!" he said; he did not need to beg this time.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the Kwang-tung man, "you are going to be one of us; good!" and he picked up a big pair of shears. Snip! and Ling's queue was gone, cut close to his head. Out Ling ran, leaving his queue behind him. He went into his store and sat down to think, when up jumped the cat. Her eyes were yellow this time, and she howled mournfully.

"Get away, you evil thing!" and he pushed her off with a stick. He did not sleep that night; he dreamed strange things and saw strange sights; he thought of his home in far-off China, and of his mother and the little Chinese maidens whom he had known before he came to the new country. He smoked and saw faces in the clouds. In the morning his eyes were heavy and red with the opium, and he let his hired man do all the work. He lay in his cubby bunk and smoked the opium until he heard a voice. It sounded as if it came from a great distance. It said:

"Hello, where's the boss? In the back room? all right!"

The curtains were pulled back and Maggie Sullivan came in.

"Hittin' ther pipe, eh? Well, that's bad for the blood. How's yer pig-tail?"

"I cut hlim. He glone," said Ling, half stupidly.

"That's good. I knew you'd come around. The Chinks allers do. Git up if yer agoin' ter git married."

Ling had a vague idea that he was very happy. The opium had brought a peaceful feeling, but he was rather stupid. Maggie sat on the edge of the bunk and the cat walked across the room with stately tread, glaring at her. She paused at her feet, and at one bound was her lap. "Hello, pussy!" she said, putting her face down and stroking the fur. Like a flash a paw shot out; five hooked, sharp claws were unsheathed and dragged across the girl's cheek. She gave a frightened scream, and when Ling looked he saw three red lines down her face, from which blood was dripping.

And the cat walked slowly across the floor with the same stately tread.

"I've got a nice looking face now!" said Maggie, "and I think I'll have that cat killed."

"Less," said Ling, "kill hlim," and he rose dreamily and tried to drive the cat out, but she wouldn't go. He gave it up and cursed the spirit which possessed the cat. "Some enemy of mine has died," he thought, "and his soul has gone into the cat." Maggie washed the blood from her face and put on three long strips of plaster, and then they went around to the Five Points Mission, where they were married. The minister, Mr. Boughton, asked them both a great many questions, and satisfied himself that everything was all right. Before he dismissed them he said he hoped Maggie would be happy.

"I hope so, sir," said she, "an' they say the Chinks are good to their wimmen."

They went back to the store then. There was a letter on the counter near the scales. It had come from China and was for Yee Sam Ling. The cat sat near it and would not move. Ling pushed her away with a stick, but she came back. He was afraid to put his hand out for the letter, so he pulled it toward him with his pipe. It was from his native town.

"Your good mother is dead," it said; "the scourge devil carried her away. It was her will that you return and marry the girl she has betrothed to you."

The letter fell from Ling's hands; he looked up and saw the cat still staring at him.

"My mother's soul is there to curse me," he whispered to himself backing toward the door.

"It is she! She has come across the big water because I did not return," and he kept stepping backward.

"The curse has come upon me!" And he felt for his queue. Then he looked at Maggie and saw the marks of the claws. With a shriek he opened the door and rushed out.

"John's gone plumb crazy!" said Maggie to the at-

tendant. "It's the opium, I guess. It knocks 'em all when they get the habit."

Ling never came back, so Maggie patched a truce with her mother and went back to the tenement. Nobody but the minister knows she is Mrs. Yee Sam Ling, and the new sign which swings over the door of the little store tells every one who looks up at it that Sun Quong sells Chinese groceries there. Sun Quong was the attendant.

This little play, which is an amusing trifle from the French of Ernest d' Hervilly, translated by M. G. Humphreys for ROMANCE, will be found not only entertaining reading, but, as it requires scarcely any accessories, may be acted in a parlor for the amusement of your friends.

ON THE STAIRS.

[*The landing of a staircase. Doors right and left with cords for bells. A bench in the middle. Staircase in the background indicated by newel posts and allowing for a few steps.*]

Dramatis Personæ.

MRS. IPHIGENIA AUSTIN. MR. HERSCHEL HUMBOLDT.

[*Mrs. Austin comes out of the door at the right, saying in a meek voice:*]

MRS. AUSTIN.—Good bye, uncle, good bye! [*She turns to the staircase in the background, steps down one step, then turns and seems to reflect. She taps her forehead.*] This is what I ought to have said. But I never think of the right thing until I am going downstairs. But there's time enough. [*She advances suddenly to the door at right.*] I've a good notion to go back and say to him —Bah, no! It isn't worth the trouble—Meanwhile—No, I won't do it. I'll go. [*She turns resolutely toward the staircase and after a second silent consultation with herself she decides to go away and disappears.*]

[*Enter Mr. Humboldt suddenly from the door at left. He bows towards it with great respect.*] Adieu, Madam, adieu. [*The door slams in his face. He turns in great rage.*] Very well, so much the better! I prefer that! it settles everything. [*He turns resolutely to the staircase and walks in a bee-line. On the first step he stops, reflects, then says:*] But—that's always the way. I think now of a hundred things I should have said to her. When she said this, I should have answered so. Botheration. It's only on the stairs one thinks of the right thing. [*He goes*

back towards the door at left.] I've a great notion to go in again. I'll do it. But what's the use? When a woman will, she will, and that's an end on't. The deed is done; the die is cast. I'll go away. [*He turns to go, but while he hesitates Mrs. Austin reappears; on the landing they cross. He makes her a low bow and disappears down the staircase.*]

MRS. AUSTIN.—That gentleman is very polite, very polite. There are so few gentlemen now that take off their hats on the stairs. They stare and pass on. But never mind that. I've come back to have it out with my uncle. Yes, my dear uncle, I've come back to say all the things I couldn't think of a little while ago. I was crushed, beaten, I lost my wits entirely. But I've recovered them. I fell on my feet on the stairs; so to say. I have decided. I shall go back. [*She takes hold of the bell cord.*] Wait. Let me see. Let me think a minute. I must get my thoughts together so I can fire them at him before he has a chance to get in a word. [*She sits down in a corner of the bench with her back toward the stairs.*]

[*Humboldt returns on the landing, makes a low bow to the lady, whose back is turned to him, and going to the door at left says in a low voice:*]

HUMBOLDT.—Hello, the lady again. She is really very distinguished looking. Good height. But really I have no desire to look at a woman. At this moment I hold them in holy horror, and particularly Mrs. Sophronia Beaker, a widow, the memory of whose husband is very much effaced, and who lives behind that door. I detest her. She gave me my dismissal, and I took it like a lackey. But between this floor and the floor below, step by step, I have reflected, and I said to myself it should end that way. A little while ago I had no more voice than a crow, I hadn't a word to say for myself. But now I feel positively eloquent. I am like a Gatling gun charged with arguments. I will go in again and I will fire them off at her,—Gee whiz—bang! and, Mrs. Sophronia Beaker, you will be routed horse, foot and dragoons—you will repent of having treated ME like a grocer who has sold you a green melon.

[*Takes hold of bell rope.*] Wait, I must get out another card. [*He takes out his card-case and looks for a card.*]

MRS. AUSTIN.—Now I am prepared. I am armed to the teeth. I will ring. [*She gets up and going to the door at left takes hold of the cord.*]

MR. HUMBOLDT.—[*With same business at left.*] Now, I am ready. I shall ring.

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*She lets go of bell cord.*] Now why should I? I shall get myself all stirred up for nothing. What good will it do me to convince my uncle?

HUMBOLDT.—[*He lets fall the bell cord.*] Now why should I take all this trouble? I am not in love with this woman.

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*Taking hold of bell cord again.*] But then I shall admit I am conquered. At least I won't leave without the honors of war.

HUMBOLDT.—[*Taking hold of the bell cord again.*] I will ring. If I don't go back I'm a simpleton. Here goes. But no. What's the use? No, no, no, to the Old Harry with the widows! [*He lets go of the cord and starts toward the staircase.*]

MRS. AUSTIN.—No; what do I care? To the mischief with uncles!—[*She drops the cord and starts toward the staircase.*]

HUMBOLDT.—[*Bowing and aside.*] Ah, the lady again. [*Aloud.*] Madam.

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*Bows slightly aside.*] The gentlemen once more. [*Aloud.*] Sir.

HUMBOLDT.—I beg pardon, Madam, I have had the honor of passing you on the stairs. It seems to me you are astonished perhaps to find me here again. But believe me, do not think,—I beg of you not to imagine it was by design. I would not presume. I came back simply to say—

MRS. AUSTIN.—I do not understand you, sir. The staircase is public; all the flats use it.

HUMBOLDT.—[*Politely.*] Very true, very true, yes, the stairs. But then, you know, it is not the custom for people passing to bow.

MRS. AUSTIN.—I beg of you not to apologize. I am

not fond of apologies, nor am I in the humor for them, I am very much annoyed; that is why I came back.

HUMBOLDT.—[*Cutting her short.*] Do you think I am more calm, Madam? I am very angry at this moment, very angry.

MRS. AUSTIN.—And I also, sir.

HUMBOLDT.—I came here to have an explicit explanation, explicit.

MRS. AUSTIN.—Me too, sir.

HUMBOLDT.—And I was going away without having asserted myself as I should.

MRS. AUSTIN.—Exactly what happened to me.

HUMBOLDT.—You astonish me, Madam. I was going away silenced but not conquered. But I had scarcely set foot on the stairs when my coolness returned, my presence of mind came back. The most irresistible arguments presented themselves to me, showers of reasons poured into my brain, then I came back determined to enter the contest anew with arms newly sharpened.

MRS. AUSTIN.—Sir, it is my own experience word for word.

HUMBOLDT.—What, did you come back, too, to quarrel, to have a difference of opinion—shall I say with a person long engaged in the career of a widow?"

MRS. AUSTIN.—No, with a widower, my uncle, there, at the door on right.

HUMBOLDT.—This is very interesting, but permit me Madam, to say, that it is not the same thing. My little difficulty is with a widow, Mrs. Sophronia Beaker, there, door at left.

MRS. AUSTIN.—With a widow!

HUMBOLDT.—Yes, Madam; and I can say it without egotism, that it is the first time. One gets along usually very well with widows [*laughs*] when one is not their husband.

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*Indignantly.*] Sir!

HUMBOLDT.—[*Understanding that she is a widow.*] Oh, pardon my distraction, madam,—I am very much to blame. I ought to have known, in seeing you so gracious and full of charm, that some man had died for you—in

short, that you were a widow. But your costume—it is not ornamented with tears. I thought—

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*Very gravely.*] But a word. Yes, I am a widow, the widow Austin, and the black that you do not find in my costume, I wear in my heart.

HUMBOLDT.—[*Gravely.*] Oh yes, I understand. The fashions change in mourning—but black worn in the heart—Oh! But, Madam, there are widows and widows.

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*Dryly.*] Say no more; make no apologies. Stop there.

HUMBOLDT.—Indeed, you would pardon my thoughtlessness if you only knew what a devil of an affair—beg pardon—I've just been having. Now the fact is, that she was a blonde and I really prefer brunettes. [*He has observed the color of Mrs. Austin's hair.*]

MRS. AUSTIN.—Sir, I have not asked you your tastes. [*She makes a pretence of going.*]

HUMBOLDT.—[*Detaining her.*] Pardon, Madam. Remain! One word! Let me take up the thread of my story. I owe you explanations I wish to pay. We are no longer strangers to one another. That staircase is a bond between us. We have come up it, so to say, together. Let us go back in the same way. Oh, Madam, it will be for the last time. Then in the presence of that newel post let me entreat one last word, and let me prolong it. Let us sit down on this bench, I beg of you. That is better. [*They sit.*] Implored by my parents to choose a companion with whom to walk through the valley of life, I came this morning to this house, second floor, door to the left—the side of the heart—at least I hoped so. Now behind that door lives a widow of certain age, Mrs. Sophronia Beaker, a widow in all the sense of the word. Charming, of course, but less so than yourself. With eyes smaller than yours, I admit. A hand like yours—no, larger than yours. I think she must wear six and a quarter.

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*Aside.*] He belongs to the glove counter.

HUMBOLDT—What an exquisite hand you have, Madam. But this widow, I did not love her, I did not even

know her. She was recommended to me, that is all. But one word of hope from her gracious lips—much less alluring than yours, I must say—would have captured me; I would have adored her indefinitely, for, Madam, I can assure you that I am good, sensible, tender, and that my heart is unoccupied. I only desire to find a suitable person to throw myself, my name, my property, including a farm in New Jersey, at her feet. I would have been very happy to have found her here, door at left. But instead I found—but I will say no more—word of a gentleman; I could not make you understand. You see I am timid, shy before women. [*Confidentially in the ear of Mrs. Austin.*] My friends think me just the opposite. I pass for a heart-breaker. It is a mistake, Madam, a mistake, calumny. The truth is, I have been precipitated from that door on to the landing, which is waxed, Madam. But on the stairs I have become master of myself and—

Mrs. Austin.—I understand you perfectly, for it was on the staircase that I found my courage. Isn't it strange that the same thing should have happened to us! It was there that all the scathing and sarcastic phrases came to me that I was going back to say to my uncle, door at right. Ah! sir, my uncle could shake hands with your unreasonable parents. He wants me to throw aside my widowhood, with which, as yet, no one has inspired me with distaste, and to marry, I don't know who—one of his friends, ugly as a door knocker, sits all day at club windows, out all night—

Humboldt.—Out all night, all day at club windows; a pretty husband!

Mrs. Austin.—That's what I tried to make my uncle see; but until just a little while ago I could not find the convincing language, the irrefutable arguments. As you, I am very timid, yielding. So instead of combating him I deserted my own cause. But on the stairs I recovered my assurance; and as I did not want to permit him to feel that he had the last word, I was going back to say to him—

Humboldt.—Yes, you were right. You would have probably won the day—I said that to myself. But, after

all, what's the use. There is charm in disdain. Let us disdain. That is why just now I let drop the bell cord, door to left.

MRS. AUSTIN.—Your reasoning is good. I thought just what you did. That is why I gave up ringing a second time. Now I have resolved. I shall leave, and my uncle may take himself off with his Herschel Humboldt.

HUMBOLDT.—Pardon, Madam. Did you say Herschel Humboldt?

MRS. AUSTIN.—Yes, surely.

HUMBOLDT.—Ah, Madam, I have been already bid to take myself off from the door at left.

MRS. AUSTIN.—What? You are Herschel Humboldt?

HUMBOLDT.—The night-hawk, the door knocker, according to your own words."

MRS. AUSTIN.—Ah, sir, do not repeat them. I thought you were a young man at the glove counter.

HUMBOLDT.—No, Madam, I am a young astronomer.

MRS. AUSTIN.—I am covered with shame.

HUMBOLDT.—And I am overwhelmed with joy, and I thank my good stars. You have insulted me, Madam, and you owe me reparation. I have the choice of arms. Our duel shall be a marriage. Name the day.

MRS. AUSTIN.—Do you know my uncle, Livingston Upperton?

HUMBOLDT.—Know him—like a book. We have often looked at the moon together through the telescope on Twenty-third street. You see, my profession. Ah, the dear Upperton! I did not know that he lived in this apartment house, but I bless all the mortgages on it, since I have had the good fortune to meet you here, and to say to you—to beg you—let us go away from here. I can't find the suitable expressions—was there ever such a staircase! A little while ago it inspired me; now it makes a fool of me. O charming niece of Uncle Upperton, let me write you this moment the words that refuse to come to my lips. You see, pen in hand my thoughts flow easily, but I am perfectly

stupid tongue in hand. [*He takes out a pad and pencil and writes, then hands the written page to Mrs. Austin, saying,*] Read.

MRS. AUSTIN.—What folly!

HUMBOLDT.—Read, in the name of Heaven.

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*Reads.*] 'Mr. Herschel Humboldt, Astronomer, has the honor to beg Mrs. Austin to give him her hand as soon as convenient. His love is, as they say in the dry goods houses, all wool and a yard wide. An immediate answer is requested.' [*To him*] Come, Mr. Humboldt, let us stop this pleasantry. We will part good friends.

HUMBOLDT.—Ah, Mrs. Austin—part good friends? That is impossible. Our hearts are here imprisoned in this cage of this landing. So for me I would willingly pass the rest of my life on these steps that are waxed and without straw, at your feet telling you that you are the woman of my dreams, loving, tender, and that I have sought for in vain. Oh, dear Mrs. Austin, I can no longer conceal it: I love you deeply, and I obey with delight the orders from the door at left, and beg you to resign yourself without question to the advice of the door at right.

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*meditatively.*] Won't this seem a little sudden?

HUMBOLDT.—Surprises are charming; everybody likes them. Dear Mrs. Austin—shall I say?—

MRS. AUSTIN.—Iphigenia—

HUMBOLDT.—Dear Iphigenia.

MRS. AUSTIN.—I beg, no.

HUMBOLDT.—Well, let that pass. I am an astronomer you see, and in the lower world, without light or heat of its own, one walks step by step. But on the staircase the heart jumps two, four steps at a time.

MRS. AUSTIN.—Be sensible.

HUMBOLLT.—No, Iphigenia, no, I cannot. I love you. And—have you a card about you?

MRS. AUSTIN.—Yes. [*She gives him one.*] But why?"

HUMBOLDT.—See [*He writes rapidly on her card*]. Stop, this is for your uncle; [*He writes on his own card*] this is

for Miss Sophronia Beaker—Read and see that it is all right.

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*Reads*] 'Mr. Herschel Humboldt has the honor to announce to you his approaching marriage to Mrs. Iphigenia Austin.'

HUMBOLDT.—[*Reads.*] 'Mrs. Iphigenia Austin has the honor to announce her approaching marriage to Mr. Herschel Humboldt!' That is all correct, isn't it. Now we will send our cards to their respective addresses by the good offices of the hall boy.

MRS. AUSTIN.—But—

HUMBOLDT.—Not a syllable more. [*He listens.*] Hark! I hear a noise. Great Scott! there they are, my widow, your uncle!

MRS. AUSTIN.—[*Quickly.*] Let us run. They may have changed their minds.

HUMBOLDT.—I adore you for that. But they are too late, now. Let us run. [*He points toward the stairs.*] This way, my love; Jacob only had a ladder to scale Paradise, but I—I get to it by a staircase.

MRS. AUSTIN.—It is waxed. Take care, you will fall.

HUMBOLDT.—At your feet, my darling.

If ghosts would make themselves as substantially useful as did the *collaborateur* in "Semper Idem," the world would prove more hospitable to them. This particular spook, to be sure, had his own ends to accomplish; at the same time he did another man an uncommonly good turn, as Alice C. Getchell has related for the readers of ROMANCE.

"SEMPER IDEM."

One cold stormy night in March last, four of us were gathered around the open fire in Jack Cobden's cosy bachelor apartments. We had dropped in one by one from our own neighboring rooms beneath the same roof to welcome him home after an absence of some weeks in the South. We were all old friends and were wont to meet thus occasionally, for a "smoke-talk." Sometimes we told stories or related anecdotes bearing on the prevailing fad of psychological research, and on this particular night, as the hour grew late and the storm increased in fury, moaning and howling outside like an Irish banshee, one of us suggested that it was a capital night for a ghost story; expecting, as he said it, a scornful protest from Jack, who, practical to the last degree, had no sympathy with what he called our "superstitious nonsense," and had always a—to him—satisfactory explanation for every ghostly visitation he ever heard of.

To our great surprise, however, he sat quite still for perhaps a full minute, looking at the glowing coals in the grate; then turning to us with a serious gravity said:

"Boys, I'll tell you a real *bona fide* ghost story that was related to me by the victim, or medium, or whatever you psychological cranks may call him, just two weeks ago to-night. I think it will interest you; I am quite sure it will not shake your faith in the supernatural.

"All of you must remember Paul Vernon, who be-

came so suddenly famous through his picture entitled 'Semper Idem,' exhibited in Boston about ten years ago; and you must remember also how suddenly his reputation as an artist collapsed, and how he himself so completely disappeared. Well, just two weeks ago to-day, while strolling through one of the principal streets of Jacksonville, a little distance beyond the business limits of the city, where the residences become estates with large grounds and ample breathing space, I paused to admire some unusually fine roses growing in the front garden of one of the most beautiful and picturesque residences of this city of beautiful homes. As I stood looking over the low railing, a man stepped from the piazza, and I was instantly struck with a familiar something about him which increased as he drew nearer, until I finally recognized him as Paul Vernon, and was pleased to see at the same time that the recognition was mutual. After a cordial greeting, he invited me into his house and insisted upon my becoming his guest during the rest of my stay in Jacksonville. His wife, he said, was spending the evening with some friends, but would return before bed-time and would be glad to add her welcome to his. As I was genuinely pleased to meet him again, and, moreover, anxious to learn, if possible, the cause of his retirement to this distant spot, I readily consented, and very soon we were comfortably seated on the rear piazza with a box of good cigars near at hand and a fine view of the St. John's River before us. We chatted about old friends and old times, and as the day waxed old and the glorious southern moon threw her brilliant trail across the water, and made visible the fantastic tropical beauty about us, our conversation grew more directly personal, and I finally ventured to ask if he ever painted any now.

"'No,' said he slowly, between the puffs of his cigar, 'I have not touched a brush for more than eight years.'

"'Then why in the name of common sense did you ever go in for art at all?' I asked.

"'Ever since I can remember,' said he, 'I was always drawing pictures—on my slate, as a little child, on the fly-leaves of my school-books, as a lad, and, later on, on the margins of my ledger, when my father, thoroughly imbued with a puritanical horror of art in any form, placed me in his counting-house against my most earnest protest. I, mistaking mere talent for genius, believed I had in me the making of a great artist; my father determined to make of me a respectable merchant such as my New England ancestors had been for generations. Fate, with her usual disregard for the whims of mere mortals, has, as you see, decided otherwise, and here am I now, a successful orange-grower of the sunny South, untroubled by dreams of art, or of fame won thereby.'

"'But you were a famous artist for a couple of years or so,' said I: 'why did you give up your work just in the height of your career? You know I was abroad at the time, and I could get no satisfaction on the subject from either newspapers or personal letters, and when I returned two years later, your old friends seemed to have lost all trace of you.'

"After a hesitation so long that I was on the point of apologizing for attempting to pry too closely into his affairs, he leaned forward out of the shadow in which he had been sitting, and looking into my face with a strange earnestness said:

"'Jack, I know of old that you have no belief in ghostly apparitions or impressions, but I have determined to tell you the truth in regard to all that is mysterious in that part of my career; and, if you think you can explain it away by any of your practical common sense, you are welcome to try.

"'After my father's sudden death, leaving me a modest fortune, I disposed of the business and went abroad, where for several years I studied art under capable masters, both in Munich and in Paris, and though my teachers never encouraged me in expecting more than a moderate success with the brush, I was still possessed with the idea that I was an undiscovered

genius, and returned to Boston with the determination of being recognized as such.

"'I had some difficulty in finding a studio to suit me, for as noise always distracted me while at work, it was necessary that it should be in a quiet neighborhood, and yet, for obvious reasons, must not be far from business centres; so, as I had always liked the picturesque crookedness and unexpected turnings of the older sections of the city, I naturally selected the west end for my field of research. After several days of weary tramping, I was at last successful in hitting upon a suite of three rooms in the top story of an old colonial house, the property and dwelling of a queer little hunchback spinster, the sole living descendant of a once large and wealthy family. She informed me that the former occupant, a young artist of the name of Grey, had made the alterations in windows and skylight which afforded such excellent light for my purpose; that he had died not long before, and that the furniture in the rooms belonged to his mother, who had removed only his ornaments and small belongings, hoping that the next tenant would purchase what was left, as it had been used but a short time, was in excellent condition, and offered at a most reasonable price. I bought the furniture and engaged the rooms at once, then hurried off for an expressman to bring my traps thither, so that I might sleep in my new quarters that night. It was already quite dark when I returned to find my baggage arrived; so I lighted the gas and proceeded to unpack and arrange my effects to the best advantage in my somewhat limited accommodations.

"'The suite consisted of the studio, a large, square room in the rear, opening with folding doors into a somewhat smaller room in front, furnished as a bedroom, while that again connected at the side with one still smaller, evidently intended for a dressing-room. My predecessor had been a person of refined taste, and I was beginning to congratulate myself upon my good fortune in securing the rooms just as they were, and also to speculate somewhat as to what manner of man

he could have been, when I became suddenly conscious that some one was in the front room. I heard not the slightest sound, but had one of those vivid impressions that are sometimes as palpable as sound itself that some one was there. I was bending over a large packing-case in the studio, so without looking up called out, "Who's there?" Getting no answer, I arose somewhat puzzled, and went into the room to see who it could be. There was a brilliant light, and I thoroughly searched both that and the adjoining dressing-room, yet could find no one, though the consciousness of another presence besides my own remained obstinately with me, and seemed to follow me into the studio. I walked over to the mantel and laid my head upon my arm, puzzled to know what had come over me, and tried to reason away the uncanny feeling that some one was standing close beside me. I turned around with my back to the fireplace, from where I could plainly see every part of the room; still I felt just as sure as that I myself was standing there, another entity was in near proximity to me. I took a book and tried to read, but the same impression was so strong that I kept lifting my eyes to see who was standing before me, and I could not resist turning now and then to look over my shoulder, even when sitting close up against the wall. The room seemed to be teeming with this other strong personality, till at length, thoroughly disgusted with myself, I took a stiff pull at my brandy flask, and while under the influence of the courage it inspired, put out the lights and went to bed. The instant the light was out the room seemed empty again, so I laughed at my foolish nervousness, as I called it to myself, fell asleep and slept undisturbed till getting-up time the next morning, when, as soon as I opened my eyes, I became at once aware of that same intangible something that had rendered me so uncomfortable the night before. I arose, hurriedly dressed myself, and went out to breakfast, leaving my ghostly companion behind, as it was apparently disinclined to cross the threshold of my apartment; but when I returned it seemed to have

waited for me, for I felt its presence as soon as I stepped within the room. And from this time on, so long as the rooms were light, it was my constant companion.

"'After a day or two I felt that the presence, or personality—I hardly know what to call it, for hitherto it had been no more than an intangible impression—seemed to be trying to communicate with me. Up to this time I had felt its existence only. That it was accompanied by mind or intelligence had never occurred to me; but I was now strongly impressed with the feeling that I was being gently but persistently urged by some one to do something, and, when I took up an unfinished sketch, begun in Italy, and proceeded to paint,—for I had by this time arranged my canvases and colors, and was ready for work,—I at once understood that this was what I had been urged to do; and was soon conscious that my companion knew something of the *technique* of art, for I was made aware of a just criticism of what was poor in my work, as well as of a genuine appreciation of what was good.

"'My particular line was still life, my best work being bits of interiors, for I painted with accurate attention to small details, and had not as yet sufficient breadth for large pictures. But one morning I felt impelled to get out of the studio closet a large canvas mounted and ready for use, which had been left there by my predecessor. I placed it on my easel, and then, all at once, for the first time in my life, felt equal to painting a really large picture.

"'When I took up my brush to sketch in the outlines I beheld a vision—and yet not a vision either, for I was conscious that the picture in my mind was the memory of another brain transferred to my own. It was the picture of a beautiful girl leaning against the trunk of a palmetto tree, whose tuft of dull green foliage threw no shadow on the fair, uplifted face. She was clothed in some creamy-tinted, translucent stuff, so made as to expose the graceful young throat and lovely wrists, and in her loosely clasped hands she held a long spray of yellow jasmine. There was nothing but just

this figure, with the tree at her back, the cloudless sky above, and the gleaming sands at her feet; and yet, as I painted, I felt that at will I could enlarge the picture and add yet others to it. Without losing consciousness of who or where I was, I seemed as in a dream, to be living the life of some one else. Somewhere I had known and loved and been loved by this sunny-haired maiden with the love-lit violet eyes; and had bidden her an eternal farewell. This picture I was painting with another's skill was for her eyes, that she might see it and know that I loved her still. It must be worthy of its object; and so I painted with superhuman energy day and night, without stopping for food or drink, nor pausing for an instant to efface, paint over, or even to note the effect of a single stroke, until the last touch completed the perfect picture, when I fell unconscious to the floor.

"'How long I lay in that condition I know not, but when I regained my senses I found the room quite dark and cold. I arose and went out into the fresh air, and walked aimlessly about till, happening to pass a restaurant, I remembered I had had no food for several days. I turned back, went in and ate something, I hardly knew what, for I was still in a half-dazed condition; then returned to my rooms, and without entering the studio —for I felt strangely reluctant to look upon the picture —threw myself all dressed upon the bed, and for thirty-six hours slept the dreamless sleep of utter exhaustion. When I arose, refreshed and invigorated, I was surprised to find myself *alone*, though it was broad daylight; I had become so accustomed to the presence of that other some one, I really missed it, until it began to dawn upon me that the whole thing must have been the outcome of a disordered imagination, that I must have had a fever, and that, now I had recovered, I should be haunted no more by ghostly companionship, nor dream dreams of lovely maidens far away 'neath Southern skies. But when on entering the studio I found myself confronted by the picture, upon which the paint was hardly dry, the circumstances of its production came

vividly to my mind, and I knew that, instead of being the victim of my own hallucinations, I had really been the tool of a disembodied genius. And I realized, as I noted the beauty of its execution, the perfection of every detail, that through this supernatural power my fame as an artist was assured. Even then I had some scruples about palming it off as my own work, though I tried to quiet my conscience with the thought that, although inspired by another, mine was the hand that had held the brush.

"'Well, to make my story short, I placed the picture on exhibition, and you, no doubt, remember its success. It was discussed in art circles, at home and abroad, and I was even declared by many to be the greatest painter of my day. Orders poured in, and for a while anything with my name attached was accepted at a high figure.

"'One afternoon, as I sat in my studio, a lady was announced. She was dressed in deep mourning, and wore a long veil, which she threw back as soon as we were alone, revealing, to my unbounded astonishment, the living face of the picture, but looking wan and pale, and slightly more mature in her sable draperies.

"'Before I could collect my scattered wits, she asked impatiently: "Where is Mr. Grey? Is he with you?"

"'"No, madam," said I, "I never saw Mr. Grey; he occupied these rooms before I took them; he is dead."

"'I should have known better than to announce his death in this brutal fashion, but I was not myself; I seemed to be laboring under a strange spell. As I uttered the words she sank back in a chair and covered her face with her hands. For some minutes neither of us spoke; she seemed unable to sufficiently command herself, while I knew not how to break the silence. Then with a strong effort at self-control she asked:

"'"Who painted that picture?"

"'Believing that she was entitled to a full explanation, I told her all as I have told you; and in return she informed me that her home was in Jacksonville, and that several years before, when she was but sixteen years old, Lawrence Grey, whose health was delicate,

had spent the winter in that city. They became acquainted, and, both being young and impressionable, they fell headlong in love with each other; but that her father, being unwilling to bestow his only child upon a poor, struggling artist in delicate health, and with nothing but his brush to depend upon for a support, peremptorily forbade his visits to the house. Their plea for delay—they were young enough to wait till the young painter should win fame and fortune—was unheard; and when the heart-broken lover returned to his Northern home, they were denied even the poor consolation of writing to each other. Said the father, "If he shall ever paint a picture that will promise success, he can come and ask my daughter's hand in marriage with as fair a chance as any other suitor; but in the mean time I will not have her bound by an engagement that might drag through years of waiting, nor will I have her pity constantly appealed to through love-letters." So the lovers parted unpledged beneath the palmetto tree at the foot of the garden. But before he said farewell, he begged a tiny lock of her hair, and asked her to wear in memory of him a little old fashioned posy ring which he placed upon her finger, and which bore the inscription "Semper Idem."

"'They heard from him no more, and the fickle maid had almost ceased to think of him as a lover when, soon after her father's recent death, she had come to Boston on a visit to some friends, and seeing the picture, recognized its inspiration, and understood that it was a message to her of the painter's undying love.

"'When her story was finished I was no longer in doubt as to who my ghostly companion had been, nor why, since his object had been attained, he no longer visited me. He had proved his love and fidelity in spite of the father's prohibition; and for some time I believed that his posthumous message had had a greater effect upon his sweetheart than all he might have said or done in life.

"'She remained in Boston for several weeks after this, and we frequently met, for she was anxious to

buy the picture, and often urged me to sell it to her; but I had grown so fond of it that I refused to part with it to any one, and kept it constantly before me in my studio, where for some months people still came to obtain some trifle, however small, from the hand of the successful young painter.

"'But by-and-by the critics began to say that I was not realizing their expectations; that the little six by nine bits I sent out were clever enough in their way, but that they fell far below the "Semper Idem," that the artistic world had a right to expect something better from me, and so on. Yet all the while, upheld by the popular appreciation of my first success, I was doing my very best. It was the old story of the Giant's Robe over again. As Lawrence Grey was alone unable to achieve success, so was I unable alone to rise to the level of our combined effort. I knew that without the same assistance I could never again attain the same success; so, baffled and discouraged, I packed my canvases and brushes and came away, leaving the artist's world and the artist's life behind me.'

"'And what became of the picture?' I asked.

"'Oh, that belongs to my wife,' said he. 'Would you like to see it?'

"Upon my assurance that nothing could please me more, he led me through one of the low French windows into a large, well-lighted library, where, hanging against the wall, was the most marvellously beautiful painting I ever saw.

"I was held entranced by the intense realism of the supple young figure leaning with indolent grace against the trunk of the palmetto tree, and waited with bated breath for her to move or speak. While thus absorbed I heard a slight rustle behind me, but did not turn around; then Paul said, 'Jack, this is my wife.'

"I turned to find standing in the doorway the girl on the canvas, only grown more matronly in figure, and instead of the dreamy far-away look in the girlish eyes, beamed an expression of contented happiness as she looked up into the face of her husband."

The passion for relic-hunting sometimes leads men into the most remarkable mistakes, as in this case described by Samuel Behrend. The story, which is German, was written for ROMANCE; the translation was made by I. Furst.

PHARAOH'S LEAN KINE.

LORD FITZNOODLE was a clever man; at least, if the world did not say so, he said it himself, and that was enough for him. There were, however, a few good friends of his who shared his opinion, though the friends were of the kind that help us drink our wine and eat our oysters. And if Lord Fitznoodle indulged in oysters only when he journeyed to town at rare intervals, he consumed all the more choice bits of venison, rabbit stew, and *paté de fois gras*, in which he had the faithful assistance of his friends. His best friend, however, was the minister of the neighboring village. The latter, though not a Catholic, lived in celibacy, and left the parsonage to the care of a housekeeper. The parson was a large, stout man, whose figure bore evidence to the many venison steaks he had incorporated, as his bluish-red nose indicated that a great many bottles of wine had quenched his thirst. Withal the minister was a very pious man, and though he was stout, his soul was filled with a poetic yearning for the holy sepulchre, and his most ardent wish was to rest in the same soil with his Redeemer. Fanaticism is contagious, and hence it was not long before Lord Fitznoodle experienced a great longing for the Holy Land, like that of a bridegroom for his bride, and whenever he sat at breakfast with the minister, and moistened his throat with a glass of his choicest wine, he sighed: "O Mr. Parker, how glorious it would be if we could eat our breakfast together under the shadow of Calvary!"

The minister, in reply, usually cast down his eyes, let his lower lip drop, folded his hands in his lap, and sighed, "O Lord!" Then he passed his hand over his eyes, and with the same hand made a motion as if

he would chase away sad memories, seized his glass of wine, or a choice piece of meat, and caused it to disappear in his capacious stomach.

"If I had but a stone from the Holy Land," said the minister, one day, "or a twig from one of the cedars of Lebanon, or only a flower from Mount Sinai! Do you know," he added, "I know a Jew who owns a quantity of grass from Mount Sinai; but he is so exorbitant in his demands that I am unable to purchase it from him."

"A Jew and grass from Mount Sinai!" exclaimed Lord Fitznoodle; "that must not be, dear Mr. Parker, that shall not be! The grass must become my property, no matter what it cost."

"Of course," said the minister; "then it is possible that we may get possession of the Jew's relic. Shall I write to the son of Abraham about it?"

"If you please, dear Mr. Parker, as soon as possible."

That suited the minister exactly. "I shall at once open negotiations with the Jew," he said.

A good many glasses of wine were emptied before the minister took his leave. Two days later Lord Fitznoodle received a call from the minister.

"Just think, my lord," he said, "the Jew writes me that he still has half a pound of the grass from Mount Sinai; but he demands twenty pounds for it!"

Lord Fitznoodle went to his desk, counted out a number of bank-notes, and gave them to his friend.

"Here are twenty pounds, dear Mr. Parker," he said; "I beg you, rescue the holy grass from his hands."

The minister took the money, went away, and the same evening Lord Fitznoodle held in his hands the grass from Mount Sinai. It was nothing but ordinary grass—in fact, it was hay—for, in the first place, it had travelled all the way from Mount Sinai, and, besides, it had been in the Jew's hands for a long time. Although it smelled like any other hay, Lord Fitznoodle spread it out before him, and seemed never to tire of inhaling its "wonderful, holy fragrance," and his friend the minister rapturously echoed his views.

A few days later Lord Fitznoodle entertained some of

his friends, among whom was an old maiden lady. They all ate and drank and smelled the hay from Mount Sinai. As the company was about to disperse, the old maid turned to the minister:

"It was very unkind of you, Mr. Parker, not to give me the chance to buy this hay."

"My dear madam," he replied, "the Jew has another holy object for sale."

"What is that?"

"A piece from the horn of one of the seven lean kine of Pharaoh."

"Impossible!" said the old lady; "but for all that, I must have it."

"But the Jew asks a great deal of money for it."

"Never mind the expense, Mr. Parker; I must have it," exclaimed the old lady.

"Very well, I will see what I can do," returned the minister.

Two days later the old maid was in possession of a piece of horn said to have been taken from one of the cows which had given rise to Joseph's elevation in the land of Egypt.

Following Lord Fitznoodle's example, the old lady determined to celebrate the acquisition of the holy relic by inviting company to her house; but in order to make the affair as solemn as the subject required, she begged the minister to make a speech when the company was assembled. Mr. Parker consented, and asked the schoolmaster, to compose an address suitable to the occasion.

"But, Mr. Parker," said the schoolmaster, "the seven fat and the seven lean kine of Pharaoh were nothing but a dream."

The minister gazed at the schoolmaster. "A dream?" he stammered.

"Of course, sir; only a dream."

The minister grew red and pale by turns. A dim recollection passed through his mind that the story of Pharaoh's kine was but a dream.

"You may convince yourself," said the schoolmaster,

taking a Bible from the shelf and referring to the chapter and verse. "See here—Genesis, chapter forty-one."

The minister looked into the Bible, then he clapped his hand to his forehead. "True, true!" he cried; "the story is nothing but a dream." Having recovered from his consternation, he offered his hand to the schoolmaster. "It is all right," he said, "I see you are sound, and won't let anybody lead you astray; I only meant to put you to the test. I shall vote for raising your salary. Good-bye." He then went away.

Dusty and dripping with perspiration, he arrived at the old lady's house. "Madam," he exclaimed, "we have been cheated. The story of the cows is only a dream."

"Good heavens, yes!" said the old lady; "of course it is only a dream!"

"My zeal in holy matters made me blind," groaned the minister. "Oh, these Jews, these Jews! nothing, not even the Bible, is holy to them."

"This thing should be brought to the ears of the district attorney," said the lady, when she had recovered her composure.

"For pity's sake, madam," returned the minister, "we must not let the matter become public! Just think what the newspapers would say—in fact, what anybody would say of a lady in your standing allowing herself to be cheated by a Jew! Oh, to what stress my holy zeal has brought me!"

"And the money," said the lady after a while, "shall we let the Jew keep the money?"

"I shall try to get the money back," said the minister; "but don't say a word, or we shall be laughed at."

After two days he was fortunate enough to be able to return the money to the old lady.

The invitations were recalled, owing to "indisposition."

And Lord Fitznoodle? Whenever he desires an hour of unalloyed pleasure he puts his nose deep into the hay and imagines he is on Mount Sinai. We must not rob him of his pleasure.

This story goes to prove that there are few avocations not open to lovely women, but it is perhaps to her credit that she does not follow some of them successfully, as Edward Heins shows in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, in which this instance was found.

A STRANGE PASSENGER.

When my packet-ship, the Hermione, was preparing to sail from Liverpool for New York, I was warned to take precautions against receiving as passenger a certain Mary Youngson, who, while nursing her sick husband — a man considerably her senior — had poisoned him to death, laid hold of all the money and valuables she could get, and then had made off. It was thought that she would try to leave England on some outward-bound ship — most likely for America, where she had friends—and therefore I sharply scrutinized the passengers, eight in number, who were brought off to my vessel in a tender. As they stepped aboard I was relieved to perceive that none of them tallied with the description I had obtained of Miss Youngson, who, I was told, was a beautiful woman, over thirty-five years of age, about five feet six inches in height, and very slender, with brown hair, dark eyes, and a clear complexion. She had been born and educated abroad, but her father had been an Englishman, and an amateur actor, from whom she had inherited a remarkable capacity for deceiving people as to her character.

Two of the female passengers who now came aboard were married ladies, and of dark complexion; there were also two young women of about twenty-one: one, a Miss Lorton, plain and stout; the other, Miss Merwin, slender and tall, apparently not less than five feet nine inches, with the most childish, innocent-looking face, for one of her age, that I ever saw. She had brown hair and eyes, small, baby-like features, and smooth, glowing cheeks, which were constantly dimpled with

smiles. As she slightly lifted her long skirt, we saw that instead of shoes or boots she wore ornamented buskins of some kind of soft leather, which made no noise when she walked. Afterwards we heard that she wore them because she had lately sprained her feet, and could not yet bear harder leather.

From the first I could see that my son Tom, a young man of twenty-five, and chief officer, was greatly impressed by this girl.

He had always liked tall women, and anything "babyish" in their looks or manners particularly pleased him. Still, I was surprised at the end of one short week after we sailed to learn that he had actually proposed to her and been accepted.

"She is so artless, so ingenuous, so free from guile of any kind," said he, "that you can read her heart at once! We are to be married on coming back to Liverpool, at the house of her aunt, who is expecting her. With her usual childish frankness she informed me that, although having a small fortune in three per cents., left to her by her father, who was a merchant, she is at present short of cash, which would hinder her from purchasing, on landing, certain little articles she desired towards a wedding outfit. I was so touched by her shy, infantile way, blended with timid distress at having to tell me this, that I at once went to my room and procured the five-thousand-dollar United States bond which you know I lately bought with my savings, and gave it to her, telling her where she could get it cashed, and bade her then take out of it whatever she needed."

"Why, Tom, you don't say so!" I cried, rather startled.

"Of course," he answered. "Why not? We are engaged, and it ought to be the same about money matters as if we were married."

He went below, and I sat long in the clear moonlight, thinking it over as a hasty, foolish piece of business, when suddenly I was startled by the cry of the look-out forward.

"Sail ho! right ahead!"

The stranger—a large ship—put her helm a-port, so I had no doubt she would pass us safely enough; but, as she was going by, her helmsman raising his wheel too soon, her bow swung off, and her jibboom caught under my spanker sheet, lifting the spar and snapping it off with a crash.

There was noise and confusion as we worked briskly to keep the two vessels apart and prevent further damage, in the midst of which several of the passengers came running up, somewhat frightened, to find out what was the matter.

"It is nothing; we are all right now!" I cried, to reassure them, as the other ship swung clear of us.

Miss Merwin had emerged from the companionway after the others; and as I looked towards her form, distinctly revealed by the moonlight and one of the lanterns, I stood stock-still in the utmost astonishment, for, as true as I am a living man, her stature now seemed at least three inches shorter than I had hitherto seen it!

I was the only one who noticed her at the time, and on meeting my gaze she drew back as quick as a flash and vanished in the cabin.

The strange phenomenon I had witnessed for a moment almost took away my breath. My whole mind was fixed upon this one thing, and when my son came up, a few hours later, to take the deck, I described the singular change I had noticed in Miss Merwin's stature.

He stared at me at first as if he thought me mad; then broke out into an incredulous laugh, saying that my eyes or the imperfect light must have deceived me.

I told him to wait until the young lady should appear at breakfast in the morning, when he might see for himself.

Two hours later the second mate came up to relieve Tom, who then went below.

All at once, judge of my surprise, when, on raising my head, I beheld, leaning against the rail near me, a person I had never seen before—a slender, middle-aged man, of rather low stature, with hair covering nearly

every part of the face excepting the eyes, which glittered like fire-balls in the moonlight!

"Why, halloa! Who are you? Where did you come from?" I cried.

"Pray don't excite yourself," he coolly answered. "I am a detective, and got aboard in the harbor through the connivance of one of your crew—I am not going to tell you which one—who also supplies me with food. I have been all along in the state-room next to Miss Merwin's, with my carpet-bag. Had you looked in the room you would have seen me, but you probably missed the key, or thought it was lost."

"That is true; but——"

"Here is my warrant," he interrupted, handing me a paper, which, on reading it by the lantern's light, I perceived was a signed document, apparently from the proper authorities, instructing John Clews, the bearer, a detective, to conceal himself aboard the Hermione, and act as he might see fit in his endeavor to detect the murderess, Mrs. Youngson, who it was suspected was a passenger in disguise aboard that vessel.

"She is here," was his confident reply, when I remarked that there must be some mistake. "I have not watched through the hole I bored in the partition for nothing."

"Why, man!" I cried, aghast, "she cannot be the guilty one. She is innocence itself—as artless as a child. Besides, she is very tall and young; whereas I have been told that the murderess was much shorter, and nearly twice as old."

"It is not Miss Merwin I allude to," he said. "You will remember that the state-room of Miss Lorton is also next to mine."

"What!" I exclaimed, almost as much surprised as before, "you suspect that stout young lady who——?"

"I don't suspect," he interrupted; "I *know* her to be the criminal!"

"But she is young, plain, and stout; the accused woman was slender——"

"Bah!" he again interrupted. "Disguise! That

will explain all. It is easy for a woman of that kind to make herself look younger and stouter than she really is. Should we fall in with a good Liverpool-bound ship, I shall arrest this woman, and take her on board of it with me. I will go back to my room now. You may or may not see me again before we sight a home-bound craft."

With that he glided like a shadow into the cabin.

Now, then, I had something to keep me awake—to drive all thoughts of turning-in from my mind. So, after all, that woman—that terrible murderess—was aboard my ship!

I commenced to walk the deck in no pleasant frame of mind, and the morning light stole around me before I was aware that the hour was so late.

When breakfast was ready in the cabin, Miss Merwin was absent from her accustomed place at the table. During the progress of the meal, I looked more than once at Miss Lorton—the stout young lady who the detective had positively asserted was Mary Youngson, the poisoner.

The quiet dignity and composure of her manner, the frank, honest expression of her face, and its undeniable plainness, seemed to me so natural, so real, that I marvelled how the detective contrived to penetrate through so perfect a disguise.

Feeling tired out after breakfast, I slept until near noon.

When I went on deck, Tom was superintending the repairing of the spanker-boom.

"It is very strange," he said to me, uneasily, "Miss Merwin has not yet shown herself."

The day wore on without our seeing her. Even at supper-time she did not make her appearance.

Tom looked pale and concerned. Finally he went and knocked at her door, calling her name. There was no response.

"I do not know what to make of it," he said to me on deck. "Oh, father!" he added, wildly, "is it possible she can have suddenly died?"

"I don't think so," I answered—"she seemed to be in good health;" and then thought to myself, "Were it not that we are *where* we are, and she a different sort of person, I might suspect that she had absconded with your money."

As night approached, her non-appearance excited general comment, and I was advised to break open the door, which was locked. I did so, and we found her room empty. Her trunk was still there, but she was gone.

My son looked at me pale as death.

"My God! what can have become of her?" he groaned.

In fact, it certainly was a very singular case; and, coupled with my previous observation of the strange shortening of the young woman's stature, it seemed to me to partake almost of the supernatural.

"May she not have gone on deck last night and fallen overboard?" inquired one of the passengers.

"Impossible!" I answered. "It was clear moonlight. I was on deck all night; and, besides, I had good look-outs posted about the ship. The thing could not have happened unknown to us."

We looked to see if we might not find a note or something explanatory, but in vain.

Then I ordered a thorough search to be made throughout the ship. This was done; but no, she was not to be found, though every nook and corner was looked into.

Then it occurred to me to speak to the detective about it; and, as soon as I could do so unobserved, I knocked at his door. He cautiously opened it, but on seeing who was there he invited me in.

I told him what had happened, not even omitting to mention the sudden change I had previously noticed in the young lady's height. As I proceeded, I observed that his keen eyes seemed to grow larger, while the thick beard that covered the face of this singular man kept twitching, as if every hair was instinct with life.

"Give me time," he said, solemnly, when I had finished, "and I will solve this mystery. In a few days I may be able to do it—perhaps not for a week."

I left him and went on deck. Tom was there, looking so downcast and forlorn that I resolved to acquaint him with the presence of the detective, and tell him what he had said, and so perhaps, brighten him up a little.

I did so, but my words had an effect I had not expected. Reflecting a moment, he cried out, "Father, I believe that man is a humbug! But whether he be a detective or not, I now suspect that he is a thief and a murderer; that he knew of Miss Merwin's having that five thousand-dollar bond, and that, in order to possess himself of it, he has *killed her and thrown her body overboard!*"

I stared at him in amazement, and told him I feared that his grief had disturbed his reason. How was it possible, I asked him, that the man could have got the body overboard without our knowing it?

"He could have choked her to death, carried her to one of the open cabin windows, and dropped her through that," he replied.

"Impossible," I answered, "without the splash being overheard by the man at the wheel, or by some one on deck. Besides, I doubt if he could have squeezed the body through either of our cabin windows, which, you know, are very small."

Tom, however, seemed to think it could have been done, owing to Miss Merwin being so slender, and, in spite of all my efforts, I could not entirely rid his mind of that horrible idea.

Days passed, for we had head-winds which kept us off our course, but as yet the detective had nothing to tell me, though he said he soon might be able to explain the whole affair.

A strange affair enough! Never before had I had such an experience, or anything approaching to it, in any craft I commanded. The passengers were equally puzzled; it was the talk of all aboard the ship. As for Tom, he grew paler, thinner, wilder, every day. At last, one afternoon, when we had entered St. George's Channel, he came up to me, and said, in a husky voice;

"*It is as I thought!* Quick! I have something to show you! Make no noise!"

I followed him. We both wore light slippers, and without noise entered the room Miss Merwin had occupied. He pointed to a crevice, which he had evidently made in the partition, and looking through it, I saw the detective, in the next apartment, kneeling by his open carpet-bag, from which now protruded the *identical buskins*—I could not mistake them—*which Miss Merwin had worn.* Spread out before him, he held a five-thousand-dollar bond—evidently the one which my son had given to the young lady!

"You see!" he whispered. "Was I not right? He has murdered and robbed her!"

Low as the whisper was, the man evidently heard it, for he pushed the buskins, and after them the bond, hastily down into the bag, which he then closed.

Before I could hinder him, Tom rushed out and threw himself against the detective's door with a force which broke the lock and admitted him into the room. He flew at the man, clutched him and shook him, when the fellow drew a dirk, but in his futile struggles to use it—for I held his wrist and soon disarmed him—*his beard fell off*, showing it was a false one, and at the same time his shirt-bosom was torn away about the throat. Then both Tom and I uttered a simultaneous cry of surprise on perceiving that this pretended detective was *a woman over thirty-five years of age*—or, in other words, it was Miss Merwin herself, deprived of the cosmetics and other appliances which had, while in the natural attire of her sex, made her look so much younger than she was.

The whole truth broke upon me at once. This woman, I suspected, was in reality Mary Youngson, the murderess, for her face and height now answered to the description I had of her; and we found, while looking for my son's bond in her carpet-bag, some articles bearing her name, and others marked with that of her victim. In fact, afterwards, while ill, she confessed to being Mary Youngson.

She had feared, after I discovered the strange shortening of her stature, that I might suspect who she really was; and, besides, the *ruse* would, she thought, enable her the better to escape from Tom and get off with his five thousand dollars. The mystery of her having, as Miss Merwin, looked so much taller than she was, we found explained by her buskins, which proved, like those sometimes worn by actors on the stage, to be provided with very thick cork soles, to give an appearance of elevation to the stature.

On the night she so astonished me by the difference in her height she had, in her hurry and alarm, come up in her slippers, having forgotten to put on her buskins.

It is hardly necessary to say that the detective's warrant she had shown me was forged, written by herself; nor scarcely need it be mentioned that Tom was now disgusted with this woman, and entirely cured of his infatuation.

Subsequently she died of a malignant fever while being conveyed a prisoner back to England—thus escaping the punishment she so richly merited for her odious crime, although there were not wanting those who stoutly maintained that the charge had by no means been conclusively brought home to her. However, after occupying the public mind for more than the proverbial nine days, the "Youngson Case," as it was called, gave place to a fresher sensation.

"What are animals, Mamma?" once asked a young lady who was not old enough to have developed any maidenly reserve.

"Things that go on legs," was the answer.

"Stockings, Mamma?"

The child had never heard of the events described in this story, written for ROMANCE by Emma Carleton, or no such absurd idea would have occurred to her.

THE FROLICSOME MANDARIN.

[Those little, lawless, azure-tinctured grotesques.—CHAS. LAMB.]

BEFORE Clementine went down to Milltown for the summer she made up her mind that she would bend all her energies to wheedle Aunt Phœbe out of the old blue ginger-jar that Uncle Julius had brought home from China, little thinking that the old slant-eyed, fat-sided mandarin would take such a jocular interest in her joys and sorrows.

The old blue jar had perched for many years on the corner of the high mantel-piece in the old-fashioned country parlor, and Aunt Phœbe knew that if she gave it to Clementine she would have a dreadfully lonesome feeling every time she stood on a chair to dust the old clock, the shells, the peddler vases, the feather fans, and other companions of its lofty abode. But Clementine was an accomplished wheedler, and the fond old aunt finally said she might have her wish.

When Aunt Phœbe gave over to Clementine her right and title to the old blue jar, Randall was leaning in the window and idly sifting rose-leaves from the old climbing vine through the meshes of his tennis-racket. He sympathized with her lively admiration for the antique and unique in china, and was glad that she had attained her heart's desire; but a more absorbing interest possessed his manly breast.

Clementine was going home in the morning, and he had been trying in vain for several days to get the feeble courage of his ardent convictions up to the de-

clarative point. She was such a lively, fun-loving girl, and love, you know, is such intensely serious business. Several times Randall fancied he had found her in a sober and properly receptive frame of mind, when, with a trifling jest, she would defeat his intention and put the little god to flight.

Now, however, when the slant-eyed mandarin on the blue jar winked at him through the vines, Randall said to himself enthusiastically:

"Well, old boy, that's the very thing! Thank you for the bright idea! Are they all as clever as you are over in China?"

That night, in his room under the eaves, he constructed an eloquent letter to Clementine, and, in the early morning, sneaked into the parlor and deposited it in the robust bosom of the old blue mandarin.

"If she finds it before she goes home it is all right," said the timorous, adoring fellow, "and if she doesn't find it until afterward it will be all right too."

But the mandarin felt a little funny that day; so, when Clementine packed her trunk, he inspired her to stuff the ginger-jar full of her silken hose, that the precious article might take no risks of breakage in its voyage. So, when Randall parted from her at the station she made no sign of knowing anything in particular, and his hopeful heart decided that she would surely find the letter when she reached home, and he would then hear from her.

Now Clementine was a girl who always had a great many things on her mind, and when she had unpacked the treasured jar and placed it on a dainty table in her pretty parlor—with a self-congratulatory thought that it was so respectable to have things that one's relatives had brought from China—she wholly forgot the curious load that the mandarin had on his breast. She missed her silken hose, of course, and pestered Aunt Phœbe with messages about them.

In Milltown, as you may imagine, Randall waited for the answer to his letter. Awhile he waited patiently, then impatiently awhile, and then dived into his law-

books with that "composure of settled distress" which lovers have known in every age and clime. He did not dream that the slant-eyed mandarin would be guilty of the ungentlemanly trick of intercepting a love-letter.

But the fun-loving mandarin knew what he was about. He was not without experience in these matters, and he wanted to punish Clementine a trifle, and bring her to the proper condition of seriousness.

And Clementine was feeling the situation with all the sobriety that was desirable. She had suspected all summer that Randall had a tender feeling for her which she felt qualified to reciprocate, but she was a proud girl, and could not, by a feather's weight, influence the balance of his intentions. Therefore, behind her smiles, she had been not a little wounded that he had allowed her to come home without having given expression to his sentiments.

So she, too, now took on a sober countenance, and banished thought and regret by joining several new clubs and taking membership in two or three more charitable organizations.

Just before Christmas, Randall, one day, experienced in his breast a sort of imperative intimation—perhaps direct from the slant-eyed mandarin, who knows?—that he might hear of something to his advantage if he should go down to the city and call upon Clementine; so, after some futile resistance to the message, he betook himself thither.

He was graciously received by Clementine—that is, graciously enough for a young man who had played the trifler with her invisible affections—and he seated himself in a cozy chair near the pretty table which held his old friend, the blue jar.

As he talked with Clementine — a little constraint being apparent on both sides — he toyed with the lid of the jar, and the slant-eyed mandarin appeared to wink at him three times very knowingly.

Under some occult but imperative pressure Randall removed the lid and touched with his finger the silken texture of some mysterious contents.

Curiosity further constrained him, and he pulled from the bosom of the now jubilant mandarin a pale blue article of singular description for a parlor ornament, and following it, he extricated a pale pink strip of similar shape and structure.

Turning to Clementine for explanation of these unforeseen apparitions, he found her speechless with wild-eyed astonishment, and, without a word or gesture, she seized the old blue jar and hurried from the room.

Randall smiled the first real, soul-felt, refreshing smile that he had indulged in for several months, and vowed by the pigtail of the old slant-eyed that he would stay rooted to the spot until Clementine returned.

What she said to the genius of the blue jar as she flew up-stairs with it only the mandarin can reveal.

As Randall paced the parlor, pulling his moustache, and wondering if Clementine's keen sense of humor would carry her safely through the trying hour, she came shamefacedly into the room, bearing in one hand the blinking old mandarin, and in the other the pleading letter he had borne so long hid in his clever old bosom.

Randall met the dear girl more than half way, and as she whimpered gently on his shoulder, he promised never, never, never to tell.

And when they were married, if you believe me, that ridiculous old ginger-jar accompanied them on their wedding-trip, and Randall packed the bosom of the grotesque mandarin full of Clementine's bridal roses, there to fade, and there forever to remain.

Now, as Randall never told, and Clementine never told, the entire responsibility of this revelation lies between you and me and the ginger-jar.

One of the best children's stories in the English language is the "Dog of Flanders." It was written by Ouida, as is the following, in *Belgravia*. She calls it "A Child's Story"; this is true in the sense that it is about a child rather than for a child, though it is simple and beautiful enough to charm readers of all ages.

FINDELKIND.

THERE was a little boy, a year or two ago, who lived under the shadow of Martinswand. Most people know, I should suppose, that the Martinswand is that mountain in the Oberinnthal where, several centuries past, brave Kaiser Max lost his footing as he stalked the chamois, and fell upon a ledge of rock, and stayed there, in mortal peril, for thirty hours, till he was rescued by the strength and agility of a Tyrol hunter: an angel in the guise of a hunter, as the chronicles of the time prefer to say.

The Martinswand is a grand mountain, being one of the spurs of the greater Sonnstein, and rises precipitously, looming, massive and lofty, like a very fortress for giants, where it stands right across that road which, if you follow it long enough, takes you through Zirl to Landeck—old, picturesque, poetic Landeck, where Frederic of the Empty Pockets rhymed his sorrows in ballads to his people—and so on, by Bludenz into Switzerland itself, by as noble a highway as any traveller can ever desire to traverse on a summer's day. It is within a mile of the little burg of Zirl, where the people, in the time of their emperor's peril, came out with torches and bells, and the Host lifted up by their priest, and all prayed on their knees underneath the steep gaunt pile of limestone that is the same to-day as it was then, while Kaiser Max is dust; it soars up on one side of this road, very steep and very majestic, bare stone at its base, and all along its summit crowned with pine woods; and on the other side of the road are a little stone church, quaint and low, and gray with age, and a stone farm-house,

and cattle sheds, and timber sheds, all of wood that is darkly brown from time; and beyond these are some of the most beautiful meadows in the world, full of tall grass and countless flowers, with pools and little estuaries made by the brimming Inn River that flows by them; and beyond the river are the glaciers of the Sonnstein and the Selrain and the wild Arlberg region, and the golden glow of sunset in the west, most often seen from here through the veil of falling rain.

At this farm-house, with Martinswand towering above it, and Zirl a mile beyond, there lived, and lives still, a little boy who bears the old historical name of Findelkind, whose father, Otto Korner, is the last of a sturdy race of yeomen, who had fought with Hofer and Haspinger, and had been free men always.

Findelkind came in the middle of seven other children, and was a pretty boy, nine years old, with slenderer limbs and paler cheeks than his rosy brethren, and tender, dreamy eyes that had the look, his mother told him, of seeking stars in midday. He was a good little lad, and seldom gave any trouble from disobedience, though he often gave it from forgetfulness. His father angrily complained that he was always in the clouds; that is, he was always dreaming; and so very often would spill the milk out of the pails, chop his own fingers instead of the wood, and stay watching the swallows when he was sent to draw water. His brothers and sisters were always making fun of him; they were sturdier, ruddier, and merrier children than he was; loved romping and climbing and nutting, thrashing the walnut trees and sliding down snow-drifts, and they got into mischief of a more common and childish sort than Findelkind's freaks of fancy. For indeed he was a very fanciful little boy: everything around had tongues for him; and he would sit for hours among the long rushes on the river's edge, trying to imagine what the wild green-gray water had found in its wanderings, and asking the water-rats and the ducks to tell him about it; but both rats and ducks were too busy to attend to an idle little boy, and never spoke, which vexed him.

Findelkind, however, was very fond of his books; he would study day and night in his little ignorant, primitive fashion. He loved his missal and his primer, and could spell them both out very fairly; and was learning to write of a good priest in Zirl, where he trotted three times a week with his two little brothers. When not at school, he was chiefly set to guard the sheep and the cows, which occupation left him very much to himself; so that he had many hours in the summer time to stare up to the skies and wonder—wonder—wonder about all sorts of things; while in the winter—the long, white, silent winter, when the post-wagons ceased to run, and the road into Switzerland was blocked, and the whole world seemed asleep, except for the roaring of the winds—Findelkind, who still trotted over the snow to school in Zirl, would dream still, sitting on the wooden settle by the fire, when he came home again under Martinswand. For the worst—or the best—of it all was that he was Findelkind.

This was what was always haunting him. He was Findelkind, and to bear this name seemed to him to mark him out from all other children, and dedicate him to Heaven. One day three years before, when he had been only six years old, the priest in Zirl, who was a very kindly and cheerful man, and amused the children as much as he taught them, had not allowed Findelkind to leave school to go home, because the storm of snow and wind was so violent; but had kept him, with one or two other little lads who lived some way off, until the worst should pass, and had let the boys roast a meal of apples and chestnuts by the stove in his little room: and, while the wind howled and the blinding snow fell without, had told the children the story of another Findelkind; an earlier Findelkind, who had lived in the flesh on Arlberg as far back as 1381, and had been a little shepherd lad, "just like you," said the good man, looking at the little boys munching their roast crab-apples, and whose country had been over there, above Stuben, where Danube and Rhine meet and part.

"The pass of Arlberg is even still so bleak and bitter

that few care to climb there; the mountains around are drear and barren, and snow lies till midsummer, and even longer sometimes. But in the early ages," said the priest—and this is quite a true tale that the children heard with open eyes, and mouths only not open because they were full of crab-apples and chestnuts—"In the early ages," said the priest to them, "the Arlberg was far more dreary than it is now. There was only a mule-track over it, and no refuge for man or beast; so that wanderers and peddlers, and those whose need for work or desire for battle brought them over that frightful pass, perished in great numbers, and were eaten by the bears and the wolves. The little shepherd boy, Findelkind—who was a little boy five hundred years ago, remember," said the priest—"was sorely disturbed and distressed to see these poor dead souls in the snow winter after winter, and the blanched bones lie on the bare earth, unburied, when summer melted the snow. It made him unhappy—very unhappy—and what could he do, he, a little boy keeping sheep? He had as his wages two florins a year; that was all; but his heart rose high, and he had faith in God. Little as he was, he said to himself, he would try and do something; so that year after year those poor lost travellers and beasts should not perish so. He said nothing to anybody, but he took the few florins he had saved up, bade his master farewell, and went on his way begging—a little fourteenth century boy, with long, straight hair, and a girdled tunic, as you see them," continued the priest, "in the miniatures in the black-letter missal that lies upon my desk. No doubt Heaven favored him very strongly, and the saints watched over him; still, without the boldness of his own courage and the faith in his own heart, they would not have done so. I suppose, too, that when knights in their armor, and soldiers in their camps, saw such a little fellow all alone, they helped him, and perhaps struck some blows for him, and so sped him on his way, and protected him from robbers and from wild beasts. Still, be sure that the real shield and the real reward that served Findelkind of Arlberg was the pure

and noble purpose that armed him night and day. Now, history does not tell us where Findelkind went, nor how he fared, nor how long he was about it; but history does tell us that the little barefooted, long-haired boy, knocking so boldly at castle gates and city walls in the name of Christ and Christ's poor brethren, did so well succeed in his quest that before long he had returned to his mountain home with means to have a church and a rude dwelling built, where he lived with six other brave and charitable souls, dedicating themselves to St. Christopher, and going out night and day to the sound of the Angelus, seeking the lost and weary. This is really what Findelkind of Arlberg did five centuries ago, and did so quickly that his fraternity of St. Christopher twenty years after numbered among its members archdukes and prelates and knights without number, and lasted as a great order down to the days of Joseph II. This is what Findelkind in the fourteenth century did, I tell you. Bear like faith in your hearts, my children; and though your generation is a harder one than his, because it is without faith, yet you shall move mountains, because Christ and St. Christopher will be with you."

Then the good man, having said that, blessed them and left them alone to their chestnuts and crab-apples, and went into his own oratory to prayer. The other boys laughed and chattered; but Findelkind sat very quietly, thinking of his namesake all the day after, and for many days and weeks and months this story haunted him. A little boy had done all that—and this little boy had been called Findelkind; Findelkind, just like himself.

It was beautiful, and yet it tortured him. If the good man had known how the history would root itself in the child's mind, perhaps he would never have told it; for night and day it vexed Findelkind, and yet seemed beckoning to him and crying, "Go thou and do likewise!"

But what could he do?

There was the snow, indeed, and there were the mountains, as in the fourteenth century, but there were

no travellers lost. The diligence did not go into Switzerland after autumn, and the country people who went by on their mules and in their sledges to Innsprück knew their way very well, and were never likely to be adrift on a winter's night, or eaten by a wolf or a bear.

When spring came, Findelkind sat by the edge of the bright, pure water among the flowering grasses, and felt his heart heavy. Findelkind of Arlberg, who was in heaven now, must look down, he fancied, and think him so stupid and so selfish, sitting there. The first Findelkind, a few centuries before, had trotted down on his bare feet from his mountain pass, and taken his little crook, and gone out boldly over all the land on his pilgrimage, and knocked at castle gates and city walls in Christ's name and for love of the poor! That was to do something indeed!

This poor little living Findelkind would look at the miniature in the priest's missal, in one of which there was the little fourteenth century boy with long, hanging hair, and a wallet and bare feet, and he never doubted that it was the portrait of the blessed Findelkind who was in heaven; and he wondered if he looked like a little boy there, or if he were changed to the likeness of an angel.

"He was a boy just like me," thought the poor little fellow, and he felt so ashamed of himself; so very ashamed; and the priest had told him to try and do the same. He brooded over it so much, and it made him so anxious and so vexed, that his brothers ate his porridge and he did not notice it; his sisters pulled his curls and he did not feel it; his father brought a stick down on his back and he only started and stared, and his mother cried because he was losing his mind and would grow daft, and even his mother's tears he scarcely saw. He was always thinking of Findelkind in heaven.

When he went for water, he spilled one half; when he did his lessons, he forgot the chief part; when he drove out the cow, he let her munch the cabbages; and when he was set to watch the oven, he let the loaves burn, like great Alfred. He was always busied think-

ing, "Little Findelkind that is in heaven did so great a thing, why may not I? I ought! I ought!" What was the use of being named after Findelkind that was in heaven unless one did something great too?

Next to the church there is a little stone lodge or shed, with two arched openings, and from it you look into the tiny church with its crucifixes and relics, or out to great, bold, sombre Martinswand, as you like best; and in this spot Findelkind would sit hour after hour, while his brothers and sisters were playing, and look up at the mountains or into the altar, and wish and pray and vex his little soul most woefully; and his ewes and his lambs would crop the grass about the entrance, and bleat to make him notice them and lead them further afield, but all in vain. Even his dear sheep he hardly heeded, and his pet ewes, Katte and Greta, and the big ram Zips, rubbed their soft noses in his hand unnoticed. So the summer droned away; the summer that is so short in the mountains, and yet so green and so radiant, with the torrents tumbling through the flowers, and the hay tossing in the meadows, and the lads and lasses climbing to cut the rich sweet grass of the Alps. The short summer passed as fast as a dragon-fly flashes by, all green and gold in the sun; and it was near winter once more, and still Findelkind was always dreaming and wondering what he could do for the good of St. Christopher; and the longing to do it all came more and more into his little heart, and he puzzled his brain till his head ached. One autumn morning, while yet it was dark, Findelkind made his mind up, and rose before his brothers and stole down-stairs and out into the air, as it was easy to do, because the house door was never bolted. He had nothing with him; he was barefooted, and his school satchel was slung behind him as Findelkind of Arlberg's wallet had been five centuries before.

He took a little staff from the piles of wood lying about, and went out on to the high road, on his way to do Heaven's will. He was not very sure what that divine will wished, but that was because he was only nine

years old, and not very wise; but Findelkind that was in heaven had begged for the poor; so would he.

His parents were very poor, but he did not think of them as in any want at any time, because he always had his bowl full of porridge and as much bread as he wanted to eat. This morning he had had nothing to eat; he wished to be away before any one could question him.

It was quite dusk in the fresh autumn morning; the sun had not risen behind the glaciers of the Stubaïthal, and the road was scarcely seen; but he knew it very well, and he set out bravely, saying his prayers to Christ, and to St. Christopher, and to Findelkind that was in heaven.

He was not in any way clear as to what he would do, but he thought he would find some great thing to do somewhere, lying like a jewel in the dust; and he went on his way in faith, as Findelkind of Arlberg had done before him. His heart beat high, and his head lost its aching pains, and his feet felt light; so light, as if there were wings to his ankles. He would not go to Zirl, because Zirl he knew so well, and there could be nothing very wonderful waiting there; and he ran fast the other way. When he was fairly out from under the shadow of Martinswand, he slackened his pace, and saw the sun come on his path, and the red day redden the gray-green water, and the early Stellwagen from Landeck, that had been lumbering along all the night, overtook him.

He would have run after it, and called out to the travellers for alms, but he felt ashamed; his father had never let him beg, and he did not know how to begin.

The Stellwagen rolled on through the autumn mud, and that was one chance lost. He was sure that the first Findelkind had not felt ashamed when he had knocked at the first castle gates.

By and by, when he could not see Martinswand by turning his head back ever so much he came to an inn that used to be a post-house in the old days when men travelled only by road. A woman was feeding chickens in the bright clear red of the cold daybreak.

Findelkind timidly held out his hand. "For the poor," he murmured, and doffed his cap.

The old woman looked at him sharply. "Oh, is it you, little Findelkind? Have you run off from school? Be off with you home. I have mouths enough to feed here."

Findelkind went away, and began to learn that it is not easy to be a prophet or a hero in one's own country.

He trotted a mile further, and met nothing. At last he came to some cows by the wayside, and a man tending them.

"Would you give me something to help build a monastery?" he said timidly, and once more took off his cap. The man gave a great laugh. "A fine monk, you! And who wants more of these lazy drones? Not I."

Findelkind never answered; he remembered the priest had said that the years he lived in were very hard ones, and men in them had no faith.

Ere long he came to a big walled house, with turrets and grated casements—very big it looked to him—like one of the first Findelkind's own castles. His heart beat loud against his side, but he plucked up his courage, and knocked as loud as his heart was beating.

He knocked and knocked, but no answer came. The house was empty. But he did not know that; he thought it was that the people within were cruel, and he went sadly onward with the road winding before him, and on his right the beautiful, impetuous gray river, and on his left the green Mittelgebirge and the mountains that rose behind it. By this time the day was up; the sun was glowing on the red of the cranberry shrubs and the blue of the bilberry boughs: he was hungry and thirsty and tired. But he did not give in for that; he held on steadily; he knew that there was near, somewhere near, a great city that the people called Sprugg, and thither he had resolved to go. By noontide he had walked eight miles, and come to a green place where men were shooting at targets, the tall, thick grass all around them; and a little way further off was a train of

people chanting and bearing crosses and dressed in long flowing robes.

The place was the Hottinger Au, and the day was Saturday, and the village was making ready to perform a miracle play on the morrow.

Findelkind ran to the robed singing folk, quite sure that he saw the people of God. "Oh, take me, take me!" he cried to them; "do take me with you to do Heaven's work." But they pushed him aside for a crazy little boy that spoiled the rehearsing.

"It is only for Hotting folk," said a lad older than himself. "Get out of the way with you, *Liebchen*," and the man who carried the cross knocked him with force on the head, by mere accident; but Findelkind thought he had meant it.

Were people so much kinder five centuries before, he wondered, and felt sad as the many-colored robes swept on through the grass, and the crack of the rifles sounded sharply through the music of the chanting voices. He went on, footsore and sorrowful, thinking of the castle doors that had opened, and the city gates that had unclosed at the summons of the little long-haired boy whose figure was painted on the missal.

He had come now to where the houses were much more numerous, though under the shade of great trees; lovely old gray houses, some of wood, some of stone, some with frescoes on them and gold and color and mottoes, some with deep barred casements and carved portals and sculptured figures; houses of the poorer people now, but still memorials of a grand and gracious time. For he had wandered into the quarter of St. Nicholas in this fair mountain city, which he, like his country folks, called Sprugg, though the government calls it Innsbrück.

He got out upon a long gray wooden bridge, and looked up and down the reaches of the river, and thought to himself, maybe, this was not Sprugg but Jerusalem; so beautiful it looked with its domes shining golden in the sun, and the snow of the Soldstein and Brandjöch behind them. For little Findelkind had never come so

far as this. As he stood on the bridge so dreaming, a hand clutched him and a voice said:

"A whole kreutzer, or you do not pass!"

Findelkind started and trembled.

A kreutzer! he had never owned such a treasure in all his life.

"I have no money," he murmured timidly, "I came to see if I could get money for the poor."

The keeper of the bridge laughed.

"You are a little beggar, you mean? Oh, very well. Then over my bridge you do not go."

"But it is the city on the other side?"

"To be sure it is the city, but over nobody goes without a kreutzer."

"I never have such a thing of my own! never, never!" said Findelkind, ready to cry.

"Then you were a little fool to come away from your home, wherever that may be," said the man at the bridge-head. "Well, I will let you go, for you look a baby. But do not beg; that is bad."

"Findelkind did it!"

"Then Findelkind was a rogue and a vagabond," said the taker of tolls.

"Oh, no, no, no!"

"Oh, yes, yes, yes! little saucebox, and take that," said the man, giving him a box on the ear, being angry at contradiction.

Findelkind's head drooped, and he went slowly over the bridge, forgetting that he ought to have thanked the toll-taker for a free passage. The world seemed to him very difficult. How had Findelkind done when he had come to bridges? and oh! how had Findelkind done when he had been hungry?

For this poor little Findelkind was getting very hungry, and his stomach was as empty as his wallet.

A few steps brought him to the Goldones Dachl.

He forgot his hunger and his pain, seeing the sun shine on all that gold, and the curious painted galleries under it. He thought it was real solid gold. Real gold laid out on a house-roof—and the people all so poor! Fin-

delkind began to muse and wonder why everybody did not climb up there and take a tile off and be rich? But perhaps it would be wicked! Perhaps God put the roof there with all that gold to prove people? Findelkind got bewildered.

If God did such a thing—was it kind?

His head seemed to swim, and the sunshine went round and round with him. There went by him just then a very venerable looking old man with silver hair; he was wrapped in a long cloak. Findelkind pulled at the cloak gently, and the old man looked down.

"What is it, my boy?" he asked. Findelkind answered, "I came out to get gold; may I take it off that roof?"

"It is not gold, child; it is gilding."

"What is gilding?"

"It is a thing made to look like gold, that is all."

"It is a lie, then!"

The old man smiled. "Well—nobody thinks so. If you like to put it so, perhaps it is. What do you want gold for, you wee thing?"

"To build a monastery and house the poor."

The old man's face scowled and grew dark, for he was a Lutheran pastor from Bavaria.

"Who taught you such trash?" he said crossly.

"It is not trash. It is faith."

And Findelkind's face began to burn and his blue eyes to darken and moisten. There was a little crowd beginning to gather, and the crowd was beginning to laugh. There were many soldiers and rifle-shooters in the throng, and they jeered and joked, and made fun of the old man in the long cloak, who grew angry then with the child. "You are a little idolater and a little impudent sinner!" he said, wrathfully, and shook the boy by the shoulder and went away, and the throng that had gathered round had only poor Findelkind left to tease.

He was a very poor little boy indeed to look at, with his sheepskin tunic and his bare feet and legs, and his wallet that never was to get filled.

"Where do you come from, and what do you want?" they asked; and he answered with a sob in his voice:

"I want to do like Findelkind of Arlberg!"

And then the crowd laughed, not knowing at all what he meant, but laughing just because they did not know: as crowds always will do. And only the big dogs that are so very big in this country, and are all loose, and free, and good-natured citizens, came up to him kindly and rubbed against him, and made friends; and at that tears came into his eyes, and his courage rose, and he lifted his head:

"You are cruel people to laugh," he said, indignantly; "the dogs are kinder. People did not laugh at Findelkind. He was a little boy just like me, no better and no bigger, and as poor; and yet he had so much faith, and the world then was so good, that he left his sheep and got money enough to build a church and a hospice to Christ and St. Christopher. And I want to do the same for the poor. Not for myself, no—for the poor. I am Findelkind, too, and Findelkind of Arlberg that is in heaven speaks to me."

Then he stopped, and a sob rose again in his throat.

"He is crazy!" said the people, laughing, yet a little scared; for the priest at Zirl had said rightly, this is not an age of faith. At that moment there sounded, coming from the barracks, that used to be the Schloss in the old days of Kaiser Max and Mary of Burgundy, the sound of drums and trumpets and the tramp of marching feet. It was one of the corps of Jägers of Tyrol going down from the avenue to the Rudolf Platz with their band before them and their pennants streaming. It was a familiar sight, but it drew the street throngs to it like magic; the age is not fond of dreamers, but it is very fond of drums. In almost a moment the old dark arcades and the riverside and the passages near were all empty, except for the women sitting at their stalls of fruit, or cakes, or toys. They are wonderful old arched arcades, like the cloisters of a cathedral more than anything else, and the shops under them are all homely and simple; shops of leather, of furs, of clothes, of wooden

playthings, of sweet and wholesome bread. They are very quaint, and kept by poor folks for poor folks; but to the dazed eyes of Findelkind they looked like a forbidden paradise, for he was so hungry and so heart-broken; and he had never seen any bigger place than little Zirl.

He stood and looked wistfully, but no one offered him anything; close by was a stall of splendid purple grapes; but the old woman that kept it was busy knitting. She only called to him to stand out of her light.

"You look a poor brat; have you a home?" said another woman, who sold bridles and whips and horse's bells, and the like.

"Oh, yes; I have a home—by Martinswand," said Findelkind, with a sigh.

The woman looked at him sharply. "Your parents have sent you on an errand here?"

"No; I have run away."

"Run away? Oh, you bad boy; unless, indeed—are they cruel to you?"

"No; very good."

"Are you a little rogue, then, or a thief?"

"You are a bad woman to think such things," said Findelkind, hotly; knowing himself on how innocent and sacred a quest he was.

"Bad? I? oh, ho!" said the old dame, cracking one of her new whips in the air, "I should like to make you jump about with this, you thankless little vagabond. Be off!"

Findelkind sighed again, his momentary anger passing; for he had been born with a gentle temper, and thought himself to blame much more readily than he thought other people were; so as, indeed, every wise child does, only there are so few children—or men—that are wise.

He turned his head away from the temptation of the bread and fruit stalls, for in truth hunger gnawed him terribly, and wandered a little to the left. From where he stood he could see the long, beautiful street of Teresa, with its oriels and arches, painted windows and

gilded signs, and the steep, gray, dark mountains closing it in at the distance; but the street frightened him, it looked so grand, and he knew it would tempt him; so he went where he saw the green tops of some high elms and beeches. The trees, as dogs, seemed like friends. It was the human creatures that were cruel.

At that moment there came out of the barrack gates, with great noise of trumpets and trampling of horses, a group of riders in gorgeous uniforms, with sabres and chains glancing and plumes tossing. It looked to Findelkind like a group of knights; those knights who had helped and defended his namesake with their steel and their gold in the old days of the Arlberg quest. His heart gave a great leap, and he jumped on the dust for joy, and he ran forward and fell on his knees and waved his cap like a little mad thing, and cried out:

"Oh, dear knights! Oh, great soldiers! help me! Fight for me, for the love of the saints. I have come all the way from Martinswand, and I am Findelkind, and I am trying to serve St. Christopher, like Findelkind of Arlberg!"

But his little swaying body and pleading hands and shouting voice and blowing curls frightened the horses; one of them swerved, and very nearly settled the woes of Findelkind forever and aye by a kick. The soldier who rode the horse reined him in with difficulty; he was at the head of the little staff, being indeed no less or more than the general commanding the garrison, which in this city is some fifteen thousand strong. An orderly sprang from his saddle and seized the child, and shook him and swore at him. Findelkind was frightened, but he shut his eyes and set his teeth, and said to himself that the martyrs must have had very much worse than these things to suffer in their pilgrimage. He had fancied these riders were knights—such knights as the priest had shown him the likeness of in old picture-books, whose mission it had been to ride through the world succoring the weak and weary, and always defending the right.

"What are your swords for, if you are not knights?"

he cried, desperately struggling in his captor's grip, and seeing through his half-closed lids the sunshine shining on steel scabbards.

"What does he want?" asked the officer in command of the garrison, whose staff all this bright and martial array was. He was riding out from the barracks to an inspection on the Rudolf Platz. He was a young man and had little children himself, and was half amused, half touched, to see the tiny figure of the little dusty boy.

"I want to build a monastery, like Findelkind of Arlberg, and to help the poor," said our Findelkind valorously, though his heart was beating like that of a little mouse caught in a trap; for the horses were trampling up the dust around him, and the orderly's grip was hard.

The officers laughed aloud; and, indeed, he looked a poor little scrap of a figure, very ill able to help even himself.

"Why do you laugh?" cried Findelkind, losing his terror in his indignation, and inspired with the courage which a great earnestness always gives. "You should not laugh. If you were true knights you would not laugh; you would fight for me. I am little, I know—I am very little—but he was no bigger than I; and see what great things he did. But the soldiers were good in those days; they did not laugh and use bad words——"

And Findelkind, on whose shoulder the orderly's hold was still fast, faced the horses, which looked to him as huge as Martinswand, and the swords which he little doubted were to be sheathed in his heart.

The officers stared, laughed again, then whispered together, and Findelkind heard them say the word "crazed." Findelkind, whose quick little ears were both strained like a mountain leveret's, understood that the great men were saying among themselves that it was not safe for him to be about alone, and that it would be kinder to him to catch and cage him—the general view with which the world regards enthusiasts.

He heard, he understood; he knew that they did not mean to help him, these men with the steel weapons and the huge steeds, but that they meant to shut him up in a prison—he, little free-born, forest-fed Findelkind. He wrenched himself out of the soldier's grip as the rabbit wrenches itself out of the jaws of the trap even at the cost of leaving a limb behind, shot between the horse's legs, doubled like a hunted thing, and spied a refuge. Opposite the avenue of gigantic poplars and pleasant stretches of grass shaded by other bigger trees, there stands a very famous church, famous alike in the annals of history and of art: the church of the Franciscans that holds the tomb of Kaiser Max, though, alas! it holds not his ashes, as his dying desire was that it should. The church stands here, a noble, sombre place, with the silver chapel of Philippina Wessler adjoining it, and in front the fresh, cool avenues that lead to the river and the broad water meadows, and the grand Hall road bordered with the painted stations of the Cross.

There were some peasants coming in from the country driving cows, and some burghers in their carts, with fat, slow horses; some little children were at play under the poplars and the elms; great dogs were lying about on the grass; everything was happy and at peace, except the poor, throbbing heart of little Findelkind, who thought the soldiers were coming after him to lock him up as mad, and ran and ran as fast as his trembling legs would carry him, making for sanctuary, as, in the old bygone days that he loved, many a soul less innocent than his had done. The wide doors of the Hofkirche stood open, and on the steps lay a black-and-tan hound, watching no doubt for its master or mistress, who had gone within to pray. Findelkind in his terror vaulted over the dog, and tumbled headlong into the church.

It seemed quite dark, after the brilliant sunshine on the river and the grass; his forehead touched the stone floor as he fell, and as he raised himself and stumbled forward, reverent and bareheaded, looking for the altar to cling to when the soldiers should enter to seize him, his uplifted eyes fell on the great tomb.

The tomb seems to entirely fill the church, as, with its twenty-four guardian figures round it, it towers up in the twilight that reigns here even at midday. There are a stern majesty and grandeur in it which dwarf every other monument and mausoleum. It is grim, it is rude, it is savage, with the spirit of the rough ages that created it; but it is great with their greatness; it is heroic with their heroism; it is simple with their simplicity.

As the awe-stricken eyes of the terrified child fell on the mass of stone and bronze the sight smote him breathless. The mailed warriors standing around it, so motionless, so solemn, filled him with a frozen, nameless fear. He had never a doubt that they were the dead arisen. The foremost that met his eyes were Theodoric and Arthur; the next, grim Rodolf, father of a dynasty of emperors. There, leaning on their swords, the three gazed down on him, armored, armed, majestic, serious, guarding the empty grave, which to the child, who knew nothing of its history, seemed a bier; and at the feet of Theodoric, who alone of them all looked young and merciful, poor little desperate Findelkind fell with a piteous sob, and cried, "I am not mad! Indeed, indeed, I am not mad!"

He did not know that these six figures were but statues of bronze. He was quite sure they were the dead, arisen, and meeting there, around that tomb on which the solitary kneeling knight watched and prayed, encircled, as by a wall of steel, by these his comrades. He was not frightened, he was rather comforted and stilled, as with a sudden sense of some deep calm and certain help.

Findelkind, without knowing that he was like so many dissatisfied poets and artists much bigger than himself, dimly felt in his little tired mind how beautiful, and how gorgeous, and how grand the world must have been when heroes and knights like these had gone by in its daily sunshine and its twilight storms. No wonder Findelkind of Arlberg had found his pilgrimage so fair, when if he had needed any help he had only

had to kneel and clasp these firm mailed limbs, these strong cross-hilted swords, in the name of Christ and of the poor!

Theodoric seemed to look down on him with benignant eyes from under the raised visor; and our poor Findelkind, weeping, threw his small arms closer and closer round the bronze knees of the heroic figure and sobbed aloud: "Help me, help me! Oh, turn the hearts of the people to me, and help me to do good!"

But Theodoric answered nothing.

There was no sound in the dark, hushed church; the gloom grew darker over Findelkind's eyes; the mighty forms of monarchs and of heroes grew dim before his sight. He lost consciousness, and fell prone upon the stones at Theodoric's feet; for he had fainted from hunger and emotion.

When he awoke it was quite evening; there was a lantern held over his head; voices were muttering curiously and angrily; bending over him were two priests, a sacristan of the church, and his own father. His little wallet lay by him on the stones, always empty.

"Boy of mine! were you mad?" cried his father, half in rage, half in tenderness. "The chase you have led me!—and your mother thinking you were drowned!—and all the working day lost, running after old women's tales of where they had seen you! Oh, little fool, little fool! what was amiss with Martinswand that you must leave it?"

Findelkind slowly and feebly rose, and sat up on the pavement and looked up, not at his father, but at the knight Theodoric. "I thought they would help me to keep the poor," he muttered feebly, as he glanced at his own wallet. "And it is empty—empty."

"Are we not poor enough?" cried his father, with paternal impatience, ready to tear his hair with vexation at having such a little idiot for a son. "Must you rove afield to find poverty to help, when it sits cold enough, the Lord knows, at our own hearth? Oh, little ass, little dolt, little maniac, fit only for a madhouse, talking to iron figures and taking them for real men! What

have I done, O Heaven, that I should be afflicted thus?"

And the poor man wept, being a good, affectionate soul, but not very wise, and believing that his boy was mad. Then, seized with sudden rage once more, at thought of his day all wasted, and its hours harassed and miserable through searching for the lost child, he plucked up the light, slight figure of Findelkind in his own arms, and, with muttered thanks and excuses to the sacristan of the church, bore the boy out with him into the evening air, and lifted him into a cart which stood there with a horse harnessed to one side of the pole, as the country people love to do, to the risk of their own lives and their neighbors'. Findelkind said never a word; he was as dumb as Theodoric had been to him; he felt stupid, heavy, half blind; his father pushed him some bread, and he ate it by sheer instinct as a lost animal will do; the cart jogged on, the stars shone, the great church vanished in the gloom of night.

As they went through the city toward the river-side along the homeward way never a word did his father, who was a silent man at all times, address to him. Only once, as they jogged over the bridge, he spoke.

"Son," he asked, "did you run away truly thinking to please God and help the poor?"

"Truly I did!" answered Findelkind, with a sob in his throat.

"Then, thou wert an ass!" said his father. "Didst never think of thy mother's love and of my toil? Look at home."

Findelkind was mute. The drive was very long, backward by the same way, with the river shining in the moonlight and the mountains half covered with the clouds.

It was ten by the bells of Zirl when they came once more under the solemn shadow of grave Martinswand. There were lights moving about his house, his brothers and sisters were still up, his mother ran out into the road, weeping and laughing with fear and joy.

Findelkind himself said nothing.

He hung his head.

They were too fond of him to scold him or to jeer at him; they made him go quickly to his bed, and his mother made him a warm milk-posset and kissed him.

"We will punish thee to-morrow, naughty and cruel one," said his parent. "But thou art punished enough already, for in thy place little Stefan had the sheep, and he has lost Katte's lambs—the beautiful twin lambs! I dare not tell thy father to-night. Dost thou hear the poor thing mourn? Do not go afield for thy duty again."

A pang went through the heart of Findelkind, as if a knife had pierced it. He loved Katte better than almost any other living thing, and she was bleating under his window, childless and alone. They were such beautiful lambs, too!—lambs that his father had promised should never be killed, but be reared to swell the flock.

Findelkind cowered down in his bed, and felt wretched beyond all wretchedness. He had been brought back; his wallet was empty; and Katte's lambs were lost. He could not sleep.

His pulses were beating like so many steam-hammers; he felt as if his body were all one great throbbing heart. His brothers, who lay in the same chamber with him, were sound asleep; very soon his father and mother snored also on the other side of the wall. Findelkind was alone wide awake, watching the big white moon sail past his little casement, and hearing Katte bleat.

Where were her poor twin lambs?

The night was bitterly cold, for it was already far on in autumn; the rivers had swollen and flooded many fields, the snow for the last week had fallen quite low down on the mountain-sides.

Even if still living, the little lambs would die, out on such a night without the mother or food and shelter of any sort. Findelkind, whose vivid brain always saw everything that he imagined as if it were being acted before his eyes, in fancy saw his two dear lambs floating dead down the swollen tide; entangled in rushes on the flooded shore, or fallen with broken limbs upon a crest of rocks. He saw them so plainly that scarcely could

he hold back his breath from screaming aloud in the still night, and answering the mourning wail of the desolate mother.

At last he could bear it no longer; his head burned, and his brain seemed whirling round. At a bound he leaped out of bed quite noiselessly, slid into his sheepskins, and stole out as he had done the night before, hardly knowing what he did. Poor Katte was mourning in the wooden shed with the other sheep, and the wail of her sorrow sounded sadly across the loud roar of the rushing river.

The moon was still high.

Above, against the sky, black and awful with clouds floating over its summit, was the great Martinswand.

Findelkind this time called the big dog Waldmar to him, and, with the dog beside him, went once more out into the cold and gloom, while his father and mother, his brothers and sisters, were sleeping, and poor childless Katte alone was awake.

He looked up at the mountain and then across the water-swept meadows to the river. He was in doubt which way to take. Then he thought that in all likelihood the lambs would have been seen if they had wandered the river way, and even little Stefan would have had too much sense to let them go there. So he crossed the road and began to climb Martinswand.

With the instinct of the born mountaineer, he had brought out his crampons with him, and had now fastened them on his feet; he knew every part and ridge of the mountains, and had more than once climbed over to that very spot where Kaiser Max had hung, in peril of his life.

On second thoughts he bade Waldmar go back to the house. The dog was a clever mountaineer, too, but Findelkind did not wish to lead him into danger. "I have done the wrong, and I will bear the brunt," he said to himself; for he felt as if he had killed Katte's children, and the weight of the sin was like lead on his heart, and he would not kill good Waldmar too.

His little lantern did not show much light, and as he

went higher upward he lost sight of the moon. The cold was nothing to him, because the clear still air was one in which he had been reared; and the darkness he did not mind, because he was used to that also; but the weight of sorrow upon him he scarcely knew how to bear, and how to find two tiny lambs in this vast waste of silence and shadow would have puzzled and wearied older minds than his. Garibaldi and all his household, old soldiers — tried and true — sought all night once upon Caprera on such a quest, in vain.

If he could only have awakened his brother Stefan to ask him which way they had gone! but then, to be sure, he remembered, Stefan must have told that to all those who had been looking for the lambs from sunset to nightfall. All alone he began the ascent.

Time and again, in the glad springtime and the fresh summer weather, he had driven his flock upward to eat the grass that grew in the clefts of the rocks and on the broad green Alps. The sheep could not climb to the highest points; but the goats did, and he with them. Time and again he had lain on his back in these uppermost heights, with the lower clouds behind him and the black wings of the birds and the crows almost touching his forehead, as he lay gazing up into the blue depth of the sky, and dreaming, dreaming, dreaming.

He would never dream any more now, he thought to himself. His dreams had cost Katte her lambs, and the world of the dead Findelkind was gone forever; gone were all the heroes and knights; gone all the faith and the force; gone every one who cared for the dear Christ and the poor in pain.

The bells of Zirl were ringing midnight. Findelkind heard, and wondered that only two hours had gone by since his mother had kissed him in his bed. It seemed to him as if long, long nights had rolled away, and he had lived a hundred years.

He did not feel any fear of the dark, calm night, lit now and then by silvery gleams of moon and stars. The mountain was his old familiar friend, and the ways of it had no more terror for him than these hills here

used to have for the bold heart of Kaiser Max. Indeed, all he thought of was Katte—Katte and the lambs. He knew the way that the sheep-tracks ran; the sheep could not climb so high as the goats; and he knew, too, that little Stefan could not climb so high as he. So he began his search low down upon Martinswand.

After midnight the cold increased; there were snow-clouds hanging near, and they opened over his head, and the soft snow came flying along. For himself he did not mind it, but alas for the lambs!—if it covered them, how would he find them? And if they slept in it they were dead.

It was bleak and bare on the mountain-side, though there were still patches of grass such as the flocks liked, that had grown since the hay was cut. The frost of the night made the stone slippery, and even the irons gripped it with difficulty; and there was a strong wind rising like a giant's breath, and blowing his small horn lantern to and fro.

Now and then he quaked a little with fear — not fear of the night or the mountains, but of strange spirits and dwarfs and goblins of ill-repute, said to haunt Martinswand after nightfall. Old women had told him of such things, though the priest always said that they were only foolish tales, there being nothing on God's earth wicked, save men and women who had not clean hearts and hands. Findelkind believed the priest; still, all alone on the side of the mountain, with the snow-flakes flying round him, he felt a nervous thrill that made him tremble and almost turn backward. Almost, but not quite; for he thought of Katte and the poor little lambs lost—and perhaps dead—through his fault.

The path went zig-zag and was very steep; the Arolla pines swayed their boughs in his face; stones that lay in his path unseen in the gloom made him stumble. Now and then a large bird of the night flew by with a rushing sound; the air grew so cold that all Martinswand might have been turning to one huge glacier. All at once he heard through the stillness—for there is nothing so still as a mountain-side in snow — a little

pitiful bleat. All his terrors vanished; all his memories of ghost-tales passed away; his heart gave a leap of joy; he was sure it was the cry of the lambs. He stopped to listen more surely. He was now many score of feet above the level of his home and of Zirl; he was, as nearly as he could judge, half-way as high as where the cross in the cavern marks the spot of the Kaiser's peril. The little bleat sounded above him, and it was very feeble and faint.

Findelkind set his lantern down, braced himself up by drawing tighter his old leathern girdle, set his sheepskin cap firm on his forehead, and went toward the sound as far as he could judge that it might be. He was out of the woods now; there were only a few straggling pines rooted here and there in a mass of loose-lying rock and slate; so much he could tell by the light of the lantern, and the lambs, by the bleating, seemed still above him.

It does not, perhaps, seem very hard labor to hunt about by a dusky light upon a desolate mountain-side; but when the snow is falling fast, when the light is only a small circle, wavering, yellowish on the white—when around is a wilderness of loose stones and yawning clefts—when the air is ice and the hour is past midnight—the task is not a light one for a man; and Findelkind was a child, like that Findelkind that was in heaven.

Long, very long, was his search; he grew hot and forgot all fear, except a spasm of terror lest his light should burn low and die out. The bleating had quite ceased now, and there was not even a sigh to guide him; but he knew that near him the lambs must be, and he did not waver nor despair.

He did not pray; praying in the morning had been no use; but he trusted in God, and he labored hard, toiling to and fro, seeking in every nook and behind each stone, and straining every muscle and nerve, till the sweat rolled in a briny dew off his forehead, and his curls dripped with wet. At last, with a scream of joy, he touched some soft close wool that gleamed white as

the white snow. He knelt down on the ground and peered behind the stone by the full light of his lantern. There lay the little lambs — two little brothers, twin brothers, huddled close together, asleep. Asleep? He was sure they were asleep, for they were so silent and still.

He bowed over them, and kissed them, and laughed, and cried, and kissed them again. Then a sudden horror seized him; they were so very still. There they lay, cuddled close, one on another, one little white head on each little white body; drawn closer than ever together to try and get warm.

He called to them; he touched them; then he caught them up in his arms, and kissed them again, and again, and again. Alas! they were frozen and dead. Never again would they leap in the long green grass, and frisk with one another, and lie happy by Katte's side; they had died calling for their mother, and in the long, cold, cruel night only Death had answered.

Findelkind did not weep nor scream, nor tremble; his heart seemed frozen, like the dead lambs.

It was he who had killed them.

He rose up and gathered them in his arms, and cuddled them in the skirts of his sheepskin tunic, and cast his staff away that he might carry them; and so, thus burdened with their weight, set his face to the snow and the wind once more, and began his downward way.

Once a great sob shook him; that was all. Now he had no fear.

The night might have been noonday, the snow-storm might have been summer, for aught that he knew or cared.

Long and weary was the way, and often he stumbled and had to rest; often the terrible sleep of the snow lay heavy on his eyelids, and he longed to lie down and be at rest, as the little brothers were; often it seemed to him that he would never reach home again. But he shook the lethargy off him and resisted the longing, and held on his way; he knew that his mother would mourn for him as Katte mourned for the lambs. At length,

through all difficulty and danger, when his light had spent itself and his strength had well-nigh spent itself, too, his feet touched the old high-road. There were flickering torches and many people, and loud cries around the church, as there had been four hundred years before, when the last Sacrament had been said in the valley for the hunter king in peril above.

His mother, being sleepless and anxious, had risen long before it was dawn, and had gone to the children's chamber, and had found the bed of Findelkind empty once more.

He came into the midst of the people with the two little lambs in his arms, and he heeded neither the out-cries of neighbors nor the frenzied joy of his mother; his eyes looked straight before him, and his face was white like the snow.

"I killed them," he said; and then two great tears rolled down his cheeks and fell on the little cold bodies of the two little dead brothers.

Findelkind was very ill for many nights and many days after that.

Whenever he spoke in his fever he always said, "I killed them!"

Never anything else.

So the dreary winter months went by, while the deep snow filled uplands and meadows, and covered the great mountains from summit to base, and all around Martinswand was quite still, and now and then the post went by to Zirl, and on the holy days the bells tolled; that was all. His mother sat between the stove and his bed with a sore heart; and his father, as he went to and fro between the walls of beaten snow, from the woodshed to the cattle-byre, was sorrowful, thinking to himself the child would die, and join that earlier Findelkind whose home was with the saints.

But the child did not die.

He lay weak and wasted and almost motionless a long time; but slowly, as the springtime drew near, and the snows on the lower hills loosened, and the abounding waters coursed green and crystal-clear down all the

sides of the hills, Findelkind revived as the earth did, and by the time the new grass was springing and the first blue of the gentian gleamed on the Alps, he was well.

But to this day he seldom plays and scarcely ever laughs. His face is sad, and his eyes have a look of trouble.

Sometimes the priest of Zirl says of him to others: "He will be a great poet or a great hero some day." Who knows?

Meanwhile, in the heart of the child there remains always a weary pain, that lies on his childish life as a stone may lie on a flower.

"I killed them!" he says often to himself, thinking of the two little white brothers frozen to death on Martinswand that cruel night; and he does the things that are told him, and is obedient, and tries to be content with the humble daily duties that are his lot, and when he says his prayers at bedtime always ends them so:

"Dear God, do let the little lambs play with Findelkind that is in heaven."

Note.—The railway now, alas! already commenced over the Arlberg, will pass through dear old Landeck and ruin the lovely landscape of Findelkind's Inn Valley and green Mittelgebirge. Such is progress!

This story of the trials of a broken-down and stranded old bookkeeper comes from the New York *Evening Sun*. It was written by Acton Davies.

EARNING AN EPITAPH.

The old man took the ledgers out of the safe one by one and then replaced them. There were twenty-seven of them in all, and in the making of each of them he had had a part. There were actually tears in his eyes as the door of the safe clanged to; and turning away he walked into the outer office with a feeling of desolation in his heart as though he had just consigned his dearest friend to a sepulchre.

Half mechanically he mounted his well-worn stool again and gazed through the little glass window out into the great warerooms for the last time. The rooms were empty and deserted, for the Sheriff's sale, held three days ago, had cleared them effectually of their stock. And now there was nothing for it but to lock the office up, hand the key to the janitor, and be gone.

"I want you to see the last of Twichell, Clance & Co., Ham," the senior partner had said that morning when he dropped in to say good by. "You've been with us since the beginning, and I dare say you'll like to see the old firm out. It's hard lines, Ham—very hard lines on all of us, you know. We're all in the same boat, however—you, who've lost the few little hundreds that you saved from your salary, and I, who have lost my thousands. The whole concern has gone to the bottom, Ham, and the shoe pinches equally all round. It's very hard on you, I know, for you're not so young as the rest of us, and you have been here such a long time. Twenty-seven years, is it? Good heavens, what an eternity! I can remember you sitting over at the junior's desk there when I was a little chap in short trousers. You've been an excellent worker," repeated the

senior partner, gradually resuming the superior manner he was wont to exhibit to his employees. "If my name will be of any use to you—though it's not held in the greatest esteem just at the present moment," he added, with a bitter smile, "use it, of course. But then, with the wide acquaintance you've gained since you've been here people will be only too glad to snap you up."

"Ah, yes, sir," Ham had answered, "but I ain't what I used to be, you know. It ain't that I'm so old—I ain't fifty as yet; but the doctor says if I don't have lots of fresh air it's only a question of time——"

"Tut, tut, Ham! Confound the doctors! They're a lot of croakers. You're all right for another half century. Now good by, Ham, and good luck to you." He held his hand out, and as old Jared Ham grasped it the senior partner, whose mad extravagance and foolhardy tactics had brought the old firm to shipwreck, seemed to fade away, and in his place there stood a curly-haired little fellow, who used to come down to the office with his father now and then and was forever getting into scrapes.

"God bless you, Master Charlie!" Ham had said, and then waving his hand airily to him the senior partner had taken his leave.

Ham sat there for some little while, and then getting up suddenly he told himself that the sooner things were ended now the better. So going to the cupboard he brought forth his old office coat, and then taking the little turkey-red penwiper off his desk, his favorite penholder, the little almanac that hung above the desk, and a few other little trifles, he wrapped them up in a newspaper. "I'll put 'em round my room," he said to himself, "and they'll look like old times a bit."

Then taking up his parcel he passed out and locked the door. He handed the key to the janitor and walked slowly toward his lodgings. He was free now—off for an indefinite holiday, at nobody's beck or call. He had chuckled to himself at the thought of it, for years and years ago, when he had first come to the city from his New Hampshire home, he had dreamed of a time of

this sort when he should be absolutely his own master. Only he was to have been a rich man, according to the dream, and not a bookkeeper out of employment, with a little less than one hundred dollars to his name. Still, even though the circumstances were altered, the fact remained that he was free. Why not get away from the great bustling city for a little while? The doctor had told him he needed fresh air. And if the old people had been alive he would have gone back to them, confident, even thus late in the day, of a loving welcome home. But they were dead, and there was only Rosie who would care about seeing him now—and Rosie was married. He remembered, as though it were but yesterday, the night he took up a copy of the village paper and saw the notice of her marriage. And he knew that it was all his own fault—that was the worst cut of all. If he had only written now and then, or gone up to New Hampshire when his vacation came, things might have turned out differently. But there was no use talking of that now. He had taken in exchange for Rosie a lot of ledgers, whose columns, with their mystical figures and decimal points, had allured him and held him as though with chains. He could not undo the past, but he could live differently in the future.

"Just think!" he said to himself. "Supposin' I was to die now, there ain't a livin' soul but Rosie as would care a cent. Likely as not she'd never hear of it, and as I ain't got money enough for a gravestone after my funeral expenses is paid, I wouldn't be a bit better off than them poor creatures as lies up in the Potter's Field. But marble ain't the stuff to make tombstones of, any way—it's hearts as I wants. Mine made out of hearts! I'm a pretty cranky old customer, not over good lookin'. I never was one of them as can make friends like a streak of lightning. But there's the children! God bless 'em! and it's them I'll look to for my epitaph."

Two days later he gathered his little household goods together and moved to a cheaper street down town. He decided to be very economical until he had obtained a good situation. Days passed, and weeks, but he heard

of no opening. His funds ran very low. At last there came a day when Ham resolved that he would no longer haunt the agencies, but go out on his own account and, no matter what it was, accept the very first thing that offered. Help came that night from a very unlooked-for quarter.

On the floor below him lived an old man and his little boy and girl. The girl was a little mite of a creature, and the boy, several years older, was a cripple. Ham and the children were great friends. He used to spend the greater part of his time there, helping the boy, Leo, to sort stamps.

There was a hospital somewhere in the country which had offered a cot to any invalid who would collect a million postage stamps. It was the one ambition of Leo's life now to gain that prize. There were thousands and thousands of stamps already done up in neat little packages containing a hundred each, but Leo was learning to his sorrow that a million was a "monstrous big" number, and the end was by no means yet.

But on the evening in question Ham met Leo's father for the first time. "'Ow de do, Mr. 'Am!" he exclaimed, coming forward and shaking hands, "I was just tellin' Leo as I've just 'eard of a situation as would suit you nicely. It's open-air work and very 'ealthy. I'm in the same business myself for a firm on Broadway. This situation is on Grand Street, where the walkin's particular good, and I can recommend the boards to use as being very light. I'm a sandwich man, you know, and so you'll be before long, I 'ope."

It took Ham some little time to grasp the situation, and it took him a still longer time to consent. Suppose some of the old firm—one of the office boys, even—were to see him, the whilom bookkeeper, treading the street between two boards on which the virtues of a patent medicine were extolled in effusive terms—what would they say? But it was no time for reflection. He was happy here, and the thought of going out into the world again fairly appalled him, and so he accepted the position and began his duties on the morrow.

Really, all things considered, after a month's trial Jared did not find it as trying a position as he expected. And there was one great thing about it, it enabled him to help Leo. He made friends with all the shop boys along his route by degrees, and got them to save all the stamped envelopes for him, and in the evening he would take them away. In return there were many little favors he did for them. He was by no means his old self nowadays, and his mind was apt to stray, but figures had always been a ruling passion with him, and he was as good a mathematician as ever. There was one little office boy in the grocery at the corner to whom he was a boon in this respect. It was part of his duties to add the accounts up, and this formed the bane of his small existence. He used to sit near the window, and as Jared passed he would stick out his head and exclaim:

"Say, Sandwich, seven times five?"

Sometimes even he would be awaiting him on the doorstep, and as Jared passed, a slip of paper covered with figures and a pencil would be pressed into his hands, while the boy remarked, sotto voce: "Say, do it for a feller, will yer? I'm all muddled up." Every night Jared carried home a great bundle which filled Leo's little soul with joy. The evening was spent in sorting the stamps and packing them away. At last there came a day when the cupboard in the back room could not hold another bundle, and yet there were by no means a million there yet. Winter passed and the summer came, and still Leo kept on counting, counting.

At last one night—a night when Jared felt so ill that as he came in from work he told himself he would go and lie down for a little while before he went in to see Leo—as he climbed the stairs the door of the child's room stood open, and as Leo caught sight of him he waved his crutch enthusiastically and exclaimed:

"Mr. Jared, it's a million!"

Jared took his hat off and gave vent to a feeble cheer.

"It's a million!" he repeated, as he threw himself exhausted on the bed. "A million! Hip! hip! hooray!"

Those were the last words he ever spoke.

There's a new sandwich man walking on Grand Street now, though the legend upon his back extols the same patent medicine as it did in Jared's time; but he has failed to propitiate the shop boys of the vicinity, and the boy in the grocery shop was but expressing the opinion of the boys in general when, in speaking of old Jared Ham the other night, he remarked: "All us fellers liked him, we did." And then added parenthetically on his own account: "An', by gosh, he was a dandy adder!"

This is a story of two victories on the home stretch, and the greatest was not that of Maid Marian by a nose. The complex working of Skimpsey's mental and moral natures at the height of the race will interest psychologist. This story was written by Alfred Stoddart for ROMANCE.

SKIMPSEY.

WHISTLING, all out of tune, a snatch of some popular melody as he sat perched on a wooden fence, with his peaked cap turned backward and thrust on the back of his head, and his miserable thin little legs in their dirty white breeches, all doubled up, sat Skimpsey. From under a plentiful crop of bright red hair shone his blue eyes—eyes that had a merry twinkle in them in spite of the fact that this was a big race-day and a stake-day at Monmouth Park, and as yet Skimpsey had no hope of a mount.

For Skimpsey was a jockey and made his living on the race-track. He had been a stable-boy from the time he was old enough to lead a horse, and now he was eighteen and a full-fledged jockey. Tom Ferrars was his name once, and Ferrars was the name run up on the track when he rode; but among the jockeys and stable-boys, and the thousand and one loiterers about the track, he was Skimpsey. They had called him Skimpsey, in their own expressive fashion, ever since his father died and Tom had taken to saving money. This is very unusual in boys about the race-track, and when Tom suddenly ceased betting and treating his friends to cigarettes and other various dissipations in which he had previously indulged, they regarded him with distrust, if not with absolute dislike.

But if his unpopularity ever troubled Skimpsey, he never allowed himself to show it. Always cheerful and good-natured among the boys, and willing and respectful to his superiors, he soon won for himself a reputation as a conscientious and capable light-weight jockey.

Consequently, his services were often in demand, and once or twice a week Skimpsey made his way to the city and laid in the lap of his mother, who lived in the humblest of flats in the poor part of the city, a very respectable sum of money. It was hard enough to resist the many temptations at the track, to bear the jokes and taunts of the other boys, but when at last he would place the money in his mother's hand, he would feel fully recompensed.

Skimpsey's mother was a seamstress, and, as her wan face and bent form attested, industriously strove to do her part with Skimpsey in the brave struggle. Of Skimpsey's father, perhaps the least said the better. He had been a trainer of race-horses, and finally attained an official position on the race-track. Dying suddenly, it was discovered that he had robbed the club of over five thousand dollars; and it was to make up this deficiency, to restore honor to his dead father's name and to his own, that Skimpsey, with his mother's assistance, was working so industriously. The sum at first seemed, to these two poor people, enormous, but the earnings of a good jockey are surprisingly large, and now, the amount almost completed, the money lay in a savings bank on Broadway.

And so it was that Skimpsey whistled cheerily as he sat all by himself on the board fence. He thought of his mother, and how glad she would be when the debt was paid. She need not work any longer, he thought, for he could earn money enough to support them both easily. He would find her a pleasanter home than that miserable flat, and he would buy her a green velvet coat, like Mrs. Hinton, the trainer's wife, wore. Then when he could save up some money he would buy himself a new suit of clothes, and, joy of joys! a silver watch-chain with a big silver horse hanging from it, and perhaps some day a big beaver hat like Dan McCarthy's.

With all these bright visions chasing each other through his brain, it is not surprising that Skimpsey did not hear the saddling-bell for the first race. He did

not even heed the trumpet calling the horses out, and later the roar of the vast crowd as the cry went up, "They're off! They're off." Until suddenly he heard a voice saying, "Here he is!" and Skimpsey jumped down from the fence as two men approached him.

"Ferrars," said Mr. Hinton, the trainer, "Here's Mr. Melville, as wants you to ride Maid Marian in the Seaside Stakes."

"What! me?" cried Skimpsey in delightful surprise, for he had never ridden in such an important race.

"Yes; what's the matter? Don't you want the mount?"

Skimpsey tried to say something, but failed dismally, and his freckled face turned redder than ever in his delight.

"It's fifty dollars to ride, and two hundred and fifty if you win," said Hinton; and Skimpsey's mind reverted to the money in the Savings Bank, now only short eight hundred dollars of the five thousand.

"Mind, Ferrars," said Mr. Melville, Maid Marian's owner, "you're to ride to win. Get well off and stay near the front till the last turn, and then let her out for all she is worth."

"Now's the time, Skimpsey," added Hinton, "to make a reputation to yourself. The mare's well in it at ninety-eight pounds and ought to win. There are no other light-weights free, that's how you got the mount."

Skimpsey didn't care how it came about. He only knew that he was to ride Maid Marian for the Seaside, to make fifty dollars anyway, and perhaps two hundred and fifty. His blue eyes fairly danced for joy at the prospect. How his mother would bless him if it could only put the large sum into her hand!

The Seaside was third on the programme, and there was still another race to be run off before it. Skimpsey strolled over to where three or four stable-boys lay on the grass discussing the various topics of interest to themselves.

"Here comes Skimpsey!" cried one. "Hello, Skimpsey, ain't ridin' to-day, I see!"

"Goin' to," said Skimpsey sententiously.

"What in?"

"Seaside."

"What on?"

"Maid Marian."

"She's no good; you're not in it."

"Well, wait and see!" answered Skimpsey. "Hinton says she's fit, and I guess Hinton knows!"

"That's so!" said one of the boys, and the group dispersed to watch the race which was going on.

Meanwhile Maid Marian, a superb chestnut filly, was being led around the saddling-paddock; and the second race having been decided, Skimpsey in Mr. Melville's colors, with his saddle on his arm, made his way to the weighing-room to be weighed in.

As he was leaving the place he felt a hand laid upon his arm, and looking up he recognized Cripps the bookmaker.

"Hello, Skimpsey!" said that worthy pleasantly, "I see you're goin' to ride Maid Marian!"

"Yes."

"To win?"

"Yes."

"Well Skimpsey, keep dark on this. You like money, and you'll make some by winning; but mind this, Skimpsey, it'll hit me hard if you do. You'll make a cool thousand if you lose, understand?"

Yes, Skimpsey understood. He knew too much about the race-track and its darker methods not to do so; but before he could find a voice in which to reply, the bookmaker had gone and the trumpet had sounded to call the horses to the post.

Hinton the trainer gave Skimpsey a leg up, and taking Lady Marian by the head led her out to the track. "Remember, Skimpsey," he said, "let her out early and ride to win."

Skimpsey knotted the reins and sat as proudly in the saddle as any knight entering the lists. His freckled face was glowing as red as his hair, and his blue eyes shone with excitement. Then for an instant he remem-

bered the words of the bookmaker. A thousand dollars—more than enough to make the coveted five thousand! He need not pull the mare, only keep her from shooting her bolt at the right moment. It would be set down to a misconception of his orders, and that would be the end of it. Only for a moment, however, was he tempted, and then he scorned the idea. Putting the Maid Marian into a canter, that sinuous, graceful lope peculiar to thoroughbreds, he soon ranged with the other horses at the starting-post.

After several unsuccessful attempts to get the horses off, the flag fell to a beautiful start, Maid Marian running easily at third place. Down past the grand stand they came, the favorite, a big bay, still leading and Maid Marian third as before. At the third time the Maid had moved up to second place, and it was almost time for her to make her *coup*. Skimpsey knew this, but for an instant again Cripps's thousand dollars came into his mind. For a few seconds, that seemed hours to poor Skimpsey, the temptation struggled with his better nature. In that brief period he thought of his mother, the green coat, the silver chain, and the beaver hat, and then suddenly, when he had fought down the temptation, he found it was too late to send the Maid ahead according to orders.

For the favorite and another horse were already two lengths ahead and contesting almost neck and neck for the victory. Then Skimpsey's conscience smote him with awful force and he settled down into the saddle to ride—to ride as he never rode before, as never jockey rode before. He felt that all his honor, the honor of his name, which, humble as it was, he had worked so hard to recover, was at stake. And so that little ninety-pound hero, who had conquered his temptation, rode to win the Seaside Stakes of 189–. Hoping against hope he pushed his noble mount on; slowly, oh so very slowly! he crept up to the leaders. They had passed the last furlong post and were nearing the winning point, and the Maid had only managed to get her nose abreast of the favorite's saddle-girth. One more supreme effort of the

noble brute. One more endeavor and an unuttered prayer from the lucky little rider, and they had passed the judge's stand with Maid Marian ahead by the barest of noses.

A mighty shout went up from the multitude, which died, however, instantly. For Maid Marian had fallen a few strides from the post. There was a cloud of dust as the other horses passed, and when it arose Maid Marian had struggled to her feet and galloped off, but Skimpsey, Skimpsey with his little hand tightly clutching his whip, and his face as white as death, lay still and quiet on the dusty track. He had ridden his last race!

They took him up and bore him to his cot in the boys' quarters. His heart was still beating, and presently he opened his blue eyes and looked up at the doctor who was looking after him.

"I won, didn't I?" he said feebly.

"Yes, yes, my boy! but"—and the doctor hesitated, dreading to tell him the truth.

"Oh, I know," said Skimpsey weakly, "it's inside of me, I'm dyin';" then he fainted away for a minute from pain. Opening his eyes again, he breathed the words:

"Tell Mr. Hinton to send the money to mother, to say I was sorry I couldn't make five thousand dollars, how sorry I am to leave her. And tell them," his voice sinking into a whisper, "I didn't pull the mare; I came near it, but I won."

A ghost of a smile played about his lips as he whispered the words. Then the pain again caused him to faint away.

"Now, Maid," he whispered hoarsely, when he came to again, "Now Maid, now! now! ah!"

From across the track where the grand stand stood came the sound of a distant roar. The last race was over, and the people hurried away from the track in the trains, in carriages, and on foot, all bound for home. Standing about a humble cot in the rude wooden quarters stood half a dozen men with heads uncovered, rough fellows most of them, but subdued in the awful presence of Death. For Skimpsey too had left the track, and gone Home.

Here is a most life-like picture of a fight—or rather of two fights—drawn by M. Quad, in the New York *Sunday World.*

A BATTLE WITHIN A BATTLE. 150

Our battery had been doing splendid service.

From our position on the right we could see the shells drop into the woods and break up the formation of the Confederate cavalry every time they left cover.

We knew where they were. Jeb Stuart's old troopers were there. Wade Hampton's dragoons were there. Fitz Lee's hard fighters were there—Imboden, Rosser, Mosby—every Confederate cavalry command we had fought in Virginia was making ready in the shelter of the woods to charge on our left flank.

"Boom! boom! boom!"

The gunners knew what was at stake. The orders were to die at the guns if the position could not be held. For half an hour their bursting shells kept the front clear, and we of the cavalry cheered them.

"What's that!"

Out from the cover of the forest at half a dozen paces gallop the gray troopers by hundreds. They wheel to the right and left, form in two lines, take their distance, close up with a trembling motion, and now there will be a grand charge. The shells burst in front of them, over them, among them, but discipline is stronger than the fear of death.

Less than three hundred of us—all cavalry—to support the battery! If the mob of gray riders ever reaches the foot of the slope we shall be picked up and sent whirling like dry leaves in a hurricane. The fire of the six guns becomes more rapid—it is truly terrific; but in their haste the gunners do less execution.

"Left wheel—forward—half-right dress!"

Just 278 of us by actual count as we dress in two ranks. What are we going to do?

"Draw sabres—forward—trot—gallop—charge!"

They are driving us down at that body of men—ten times our number—to break and check the charge. If we can stop them for ten minutes the battery will be saved by the infantry. We oblique to the left as we go to close up. We are a living wedge, driving down to enter a living mass and split it in twain.

Can the wedge enter? Is the impetus strong enough to break a way into the solid wall of living men and horses? I look along their line as the distance decreases with fearful rapidity, and I realize that the shock will be tremendous.

Here it comes! Brace for it! Shut your teeth hard—grip with your knees—mind your stirrups! Crash—smash—whirl—dust—smoke!

The wedge enters! The wedge drives ahead over fallen horses and dismounted riders—yelling, slashing, cutting—keeping its pace. A trooper slashes at me—a horse goes down in front of mine—I feel myself falling with my horse, and then I am out of the fight for a moment.

The darkness which enshrouded things passes away after a bit, and I find my horse lying across my feet, with the saddle-flap so holding them that his dead body must be lifted up to get me clear. I know I could walk away if I could get my feet clear. I am working to extricate them, when I hear hoof-beats behind me, and next moment a riderless horse dashes up and comes to a halt.

Ah! but how the glory of battle excites a horse! See how red his nostrils—how high his head—the glare in his eyes—the tail held out like a plume—the ears working and the legs dancing! He has not been hit, but he has left his rider dead back there in the stubble—a Federal captain.

The horse stands pawing and snorting, when out from the whirl of death, half a mile away, breaks a chestnut charger and comes galloping down upon us. There is blood on the saddle-flaps—drops of blood on his shiny flanks. It is not his blood, but that of the Confederate

major who rode him, and who has been cut down by a stroke of the sabre.

It is gray *vs.* chestnut—Federal *vs.* Confederate. The newcomer is still a hundred feet away, when the gray horse rushes at him with ears laid back and mouth open and as I watch them I forget that shells are screaming, bullets whistling and the sabre doing bloody work within sound of my voice. As the two horses come together they rear up, neigh defiance at each other, and a fight begins—a battle within a battle. Each seems imbued with a deadly hatred for the other, and to be determined to destroy his antagonist.

Now they rear up and strike viciously at each other.

Now they wheel as one and kick and utter shrill screams.

Now they bear off to the left—now to the right—now crash together and strike and bite as if possessed of the spirit of furies.

Of a sudden I realize that they are close upon me. In their mad fury they see neither dead nor wounded—hear not the shot and shout of battle. The gray kicks a dead man aside as he backs up for a fresh effort; the chestnut tramples the life out of a wounded man as he dances about. They will be over me if I do not stop them! The heels of the gray are throwing dirt into my face as I unsling my carbine and rest it across my dead horse for a shot. I fire at the gray, as he is nearest and the greatest menace, but the bullet misses the target. At that moment they move to the left, and in the next they are past me, leaping over dead horses and trampling on dead men as they scream and bite and kick.

Above the roar of battle I hear a rifle-shell coming. It gives out a growling, complaining sound which no man ever hears without a chill. The sound grows louder—nearer—crash! The horses were fifty feet away, and it must have struck one of them. There was a cloud of smoke—a whizzing of ragged fragments, and when I could see again both horses were down—torn and mangled and almost blotted off the face of the earth by the awful force of the explosion.

ROMANCE

BEING

The Tales of the New York Story Club

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IT is with pleasure we announce that MR. CHARLES SCATES is the author of "The Livingstone Inquest," printed in the August number of ROMANCE.

The hero of this tale might have been numbered with Leander, Abelard, and other immortal lovers. Unfortunately he survived the ordeal, then failed to live up to the character. The unworthiness of the object cannot be accepted on *ex parte* evidence. The story is told by Zschokke, and was translated for the *Detroit Free Press*, by D. J. Davison.

THE LOST LEG.

I.

In the autumn of 1782 the surgeon, Louis Thevenet, of Calais, received a note without signature requesting him to call on the following day at a retired country house situated on the road leading toward Paris, and to bring with him what might be needful to perform an amputation. Thevenet was at that time widely known as the most skilful man in his profession, and it was not an unusual occurrence for him to be summoned across the channel to England for the exercise of his professional skill. He had served a long time in the army, was somewhat brusque in his manner, and yet one could not help loving him for his native kindness of heart.

Thevenet was somewhat surprised by the receipt of this anonymous note. The day, the hour and place, were given with the greatest exactness, but, as stated, the signature was wanting. Some buffoon probably thinks to make a fool of me, thought he, and he did not go.

Three days later he received a similar invitation, but in more urgent terms, and also containing a notification that on the following day, at nine o'clock, a carriage would call at his house to fetch him.

In truth, on the following morning, as the clock struck nine, an elegant open carriage appeared before his door. Thevenet, without further hesitation, seated himself in it. At the door of the carriage, however, he

said to the coachman: "To whom are you going to take me?"

"Things which I do not know do not concern me," replied the coachman, which was equivalent to saying: "What I don't know will not be likely to get me into trouble."

"You are a churl," replied Thevenet.

At length the carriage stopped in front of the house before indicated. "Upon whom am I to call?"

"Who lives here? Who is ill here?" inquired Thevenet of the coachman, before getting out of the carriage. The coachman, however, returned the same answer as before.

At the house door he was received by a young man of about twenty-eight, who conducted him up a flight of stairs and into a large chamber. The speech of the young man disclosed the fact that he was a Briton. Thevenet addressed him in English and received friendly replies.

"You have sent for me," said the surgeon.

"I am very thankful for the pains you have taken to visit me," replied the Englishman. "Will you please to be seated. Here is chocolate, coffee and wine, in case you desire to partake of some refreshments before the operation."

"First show me to the patient, sir: I must first make an examination to determine if an amputation is necessary."

"I assure you, Mons. Thevenet, it is necessary. Pray be seated. I have perfect faith in your skill. Listen to me. Here is a purse containing a hundred guineas. They are intended for you as payment for the operation which you are to undertake; and that will not be all you will receive, provided the thing is successfully accomplished. On the other hand, if you refuse to yield to my desire, you see here this pistol; you are in my power, and I will shoot you down."

"Sir, I do not fear your pistol. But what do you desire of me? Speak out without further parley. Why am I brought here?"

"You must amputate my right leg."

"With all my heart, and if you desire, your head also. But if I am not mistaken, your leg is quite sound. You ran up the stairs before me as nimble as a rope-dancer. What is the matter with your leg?"

"Nothing; I only wish to be rid of it."

"Sir, you are a fool."

"That is no affair of yours, Mons. Thevenet."

"In what way has your leg offended you?"

"In no way; but I am bound to have it amputated."

"Sir, I do not know you. At least produce before me some witness who will testify to your soundness of intellect."

"Will you accede to my wish, Mons. Thevenet?"

"Just as soon, sir, as you give me some defensible ground for your desire to be mutilated."

"I cannot at the present moment communicate to you the truth of the matter. Perhaps I may do so after the lapse of a year. But I am willing to wager you, monsieur, that a year hence you yourself will affirm that the ground upon which rested the desire to be free of my leg was the noblest."

"I will not wager, so long as you do not give me your name, your place of residence, your family and your occupation."

"All that you shall know in the future, not at present. I pray you, however, to consider me as a man of honor."

"An honorable man does not menace his physician with a pistol. I will not mutilate you without there is a necessity for so doing. I have duties to discharge even to you—a stranger. If you are possessed of a desire to become the murderer of an innocent man, the father of a family, then shoot!"

"Good! Mons. Thevenet," exclaimed the Briton, seizing the pistol. "I will not shoot you, yet will I force you to amputate my leg. What you will not do for me either out of courtesy or love of reward or fear of a bullet, you shall accord through pity."

"How so, sir?"

"I will myself, here upon the spot, before your eyes, shatter my leg with a pistol shot."

The Englishman sat down, seized the pistol and held the muzzle close against his knee. Mons. Thevenet was about to spring towards him to wrest the pistol from his hand.

"Do not move," said the Englishman, "or I will fire. Only answer me one question: Do you wish unnecessarily to increase and prolong my suffering?"

"Sir, you are a fool! Have your own way! I will take your leg off."

Everything was made ready for the operation. As the first cut was about to be made the Englishman lighted his pipe and swore it should not go out. He kept his word. Presently the leg lay on the floor. The Englishman continued to smoke.

Mons. Thevenet accomplished his task like a master. The invalid was, through his skill, in a brief time restored to health. He rewarded his physician, whom he esteemed more highly every day; shed tears of joy for the loss of his limb, and sailed back to England with a wooden leg.

II.

Some eighteen weeks after the Englishman's departure, Thevenet received a letter from England, the contents of which was the following:

You receive the inclosure as a proof of my most profound gratitude. It is a draft for two hundred and fifty guineas on Mons. Panschaud, banker, in Paris. You have made me the happiest of earthly mortals in depriving me of my limb, which stood in the way of my earthly happiness.

Worthy man, now you may know the cause of my foolish whim, as you then called it. You asserted, on the occasion referred to, that there could be no reasonable ground for a self-imposed mutilation such as mine. I offered then to lay you a wager. You acted wisely in not accepting it.

After my second return from the East Indies I made the acquaintance of Emily Harley, the most perfect of women. I adored her. Her wealth, her family con-

nections were satisfactory to my relatives. To me her beauty and angelic disposition were alone attractive. I mingled in the throng of her admirers. Alas! my good Thevenet, I was fortunate enough to become the most unfortunate of my rivals. She loved me—beyond any and all men, me. She did not conceal it; and for that very reason she dismissed me. In vain I supplicated for her hand. Her parents and friends all joined with me. In vain. She remained immovable.

For a long time I was unable to discover the ground of her objection to marriage with me, whom she passionately loved, as she herself confessed. At length one of her sisters disclosed to me the secret. Miss Harley was marvelously beautiful, but had the misfortune to have been born with one leg, and by reason of this imperfection she hesitated to become my wife. She feared I would esteem her less on account of this imperfection.

I at once resolved to become like her. Thanks to you, my good Thevenet, the thing was accomplished.

I returned to London with my artificial leg. My first thought was to visit Miss Harley. I had previously written to England that though a fall from my horse I had broken my leg, and that amputation had become necessary. I had the sympathy of all, and Emily swooned the first time she saw me. She was for a long time inconsolable, but she became my wife. The day following our marriage I confided to her my secret how great a sacrifice my desire to possess her had cost me. She loved me so much the more tenderly. Oh! my good Thevenet, if I possessed ten legs to lose, I would, without a sign of regret, give them all for Emily.

I shall be grateful to you so long as I live. Come to London and visit us. Learn to know my glorious wife, and then say again "I am a fool."

CHARLES TEMPLE.

Mons. Thevenet showed this letter to his friends, and related the incident, and laughed most heartily as often as he told the story. "Nevertheless, he is a fool."

The following was Mons. Thevenet's reply:

SIR: I thank you for your magnificent present, for so I must call it, because I cannot term it compensation for the small service I rendered you.

I wish you happiness in your marriage with the most worthy of English ladies. It is true a leg is much to give for a beautiful, virtuous and tender wife; yet not too much, if in the end one does not come to feel that he has been cheated in the exchange. Adam was obliged to sacrifice a rib for his wife; and it has cost many other men a rib for their loves—some a head. But after all you must permit me, very moderately, to stand by my opinion. Indeed, for the present moment you are right. You are now in the paradise of the spring-time of matrimony. But I am right also, with this difference only, that my view comes but slowly to be recognized and accepted, like every truth which one at first declines to receive. Have a care, sir; I fear that within two years you will regret that you had your leg taken off above the knee.

You will think it would have been much better below the knee. At the end of three years you will be convinced that the loss of a foot would have been sufficient. In four years you will affirm that the sacrifice of a great toe, and in five years, the amputation of a little toe would be too great. At the end of six years, you will confess that the cutting off the nail would have been sufficient.

I say all this without any purpose of detracting from the worth of your estimable wife. Women can preserve their beauty and virtue more unalterable than men their judgments (respecting them). In youth I could any day have sacrificed my life for a beautiful woman, but never a leg; for that I should never, my life long have ceased to repent. If I had done so I should to-day say "Thevenet, thou wast a fool."

With which I have the honor to be,

Your most obedient servant,

THEVENET.

III.

In the year 1793, during the Reign of Terror, Mons. Thevenet, whom a young surgeon had caused to be suspected of being in sympathy with the aristocracy, fled to London to save his head from the knife of the all-leveling guillotine. Either from loneliness or a desire to seek out acquaintances, Thevenet made inquiries for Sir Charles Temple. His residence was pointed out to him. He called and was admitted. In

an easy chair, by the fireside, with a foaming pot of porter, surrounded by newspapers, sat a fat gentleman. So unwieldy was he that he could with difficulty rise.

"Ah, Mons. Thevenet," cried the fat gentleman—who was none other than Sir Temple—Pardon me if I do not rise; but this accursed wooden leg hinders me in all I would do. Friend, you have come probably to ascertain whether I have yet come to be of your mind or not."

"I come as a fugitive to seek your protection."

"Then you must take up your quarters with me, for truly, you are a wise man! You must comfort me. Indeed, Thevenet, I might to-day be an admiral under the blue flag if this godless leg had not made me unfit for the service of my country. Here I sit and read the papers, and swear until all is black and blue, because I can't be there. Come, you must comfort me."

"Your wife will know better how to comfort you than I."

"Ah! nothing of that. Her wooden leg prevents her from dancing, therefore she devotes herself to cards and scandal. There is no getting along with her—otherwise she is a worthy wife."

"Then I was right, after all?"

"Oh, entirely, my dear Thevenet! But not a word on the subject. It was a stupid affair. If I had my leg again I wouldn't give the paring of a nail from it. Between ourselves, I was a fool. But keep that truth to yourself."

That touch of nature which makes the world akin will be found in this sketch written by Hal Reid for the *Galveston News*.

I WILL NOT LEAVE YOU COMFORTLESS.

A cabin beside the dry red road, twisting and turning through the rocks and sun-dried fields of Arkansas. A plain log cabin like most all of them, divided by a kind of hallway between the two rooms, which constitutes the abode. Barren and hot is the clay about the place. What little grass there is has long since been burned brown by the scorching sun. Only one bit of green is there about the place. At one corner of the house is a sickly vine climbing toward the warped and humble roof. The sun is going slowly down behind the rock-tipped hills to the west, and as ever and anon an owl hoots, or the tree toads begin their weary monotone, a boy who sits on the one step leading to the hallway turns his head slowly in the direction of the sound.

"Owls kin hop en' toads kin fly," he says.

One look into his face and the almost vacant staring eyes and the half-open mouth only too plainly bespeak the fact that he is half-witted.

His face has a half-expectant look as up from the rock-covered garden patch comes a thin, middle-aged woman.

"Thet be maw," he says, "en' she's been hoein'."

The woman approaches, and with her thin, white, bloodless lips kisses the boy.

"How is maw's honey boy?" she asks, as she places her soiled, labor-stiffened hand upon his shocky head.

"The bee keeps a-buzzin' in my head, maw, an' sometimes that spider comes to bore my head."

She sets the worn hoe down, and with a mother's tenderness holds his head up to her thin breast.

"I be tired, son. Yer maw's got a heap t' do sence yer paw wuz tuck."

"Fur whut they tuck him, maw—for whut?"

"They sed he runned a 'licit still 'ouse, an' I reckon he did make sum corn likker."

"Wuz that wrong, maw?"

"The law'r sez 'tis, but the Lawd knows we hast t' hev sumpin' t' keep the chills away."

Slowly the dusk creeps around the lone cabin. Louder the owls hoot. More and more night sounds are added to the chorus.

So they quietly sit. She forgets the frugal supper—her hands burn so. The cracked fingers are resting for a brief time. Suddenly the boy's head drops upon her hand. Like a flash, like a tigress, she clasps him to her, for his face is cold—cold with the froth of death. Silently the messenger had come and touched the troubled head. She tries to speak, but she chokes. The lump in her throat won't let her. The boy revives a moment and speaks.

"Maw, d'ye see them lites a-dancin' out thar—red en blue en yaller?"

His voice breaks the spell.

"No; they ha'in't none. They h'ain't no lites. Does maw's honey boy see 'em?"

"Yessum; en they be a-comin' in the house."

She rises and carries him to the shuck bed and lays him down.

"Lites — en bees a-buzzin'—spiders en — bees en lites."

With a convulsive sob, she prays—for the first time in months:

"Please, God A'mighty—ef ye kin heer me 'way out hayer in the rocks en lonesumness—don't take away my pore boy. He's all I got, sense they tuck my man away. I bin a-workin' hard to feed en keep 'im; en please, God A'mighty, don't leve me hayer all alone."

A step sounds without. An instant and a pair of strong brown arms are thrown about her, and for the first time in years her husband's lips press her own.

"They pawdoned me," he says, "and let me cum back."

"Sh! sh! my honey boy iz dyin'."

The tall form bends, and with a greater tenderness than his voice had ever before assumed the mountaineer speaks.

"Don't do like a-that, son. Don't go away. See hayer, son; paw's home agin, en see, he's brung you an orange. You never did see one afore. Wake up, son; wake up."

The boy moved not. His soul had passed away, and as the stricken woman burst into tears she felt her husband's arms about her, and knew that God had heard her prayer and had not left her all alone.

French stories are not written with the intention of being didactic; this nevertheless is fruitful in lessons. These will be best learned by reading it. The story is also entertaining, for it is told by Guy de Maupassant, and is translated by Dr. Wallace Wood.

THE JEWELS.

M. Lautin was the head clerk in the employ of the Minister of the Interior.

One evening he attended a *soirée* at the house of his vice-principal and there met a young girl with whom he fell desperately in love at first sight.

Her father, a country physician, had died some months before, and soon after she and her mother took up their abode in Paris where they visited frequently among their acquaintances, Madame hoping thereby to secure a favorable *parti* for her daughter. They were poor and honorable, quiet and unassuming in their manners.

The young girl was an absolute type of the virtuous woman to whom every sensible young man dreams of one day confiding his heart and happiness.

Her simple beauty had the charm of angelic modesty, and the imperceptible smile which constantly hovered about her lips seemed to be the reflection of a pure and lovely soul.

Her praises resounded on every side. People never tired of repeating: "Happy the man who wins her love! He could not find a better wife."

Now M. Lautin enjoyed a snug little income of 3500 francs, and thinking he could safely assume the responsibilities of a husband, proposed to this model young girl and was accepted.

He was unspeakably happy with her, she governed his household with an economy so clever that they seemed to live in luxury. She lavished the most delicate attentions on her husband, coaxed and fondled

him; and the charm of her presence was so great that six years after their marriage, M. Lautin discovered that he loved his wife even far more than during the first days of their honeymoon.

He only felt inclined to blame in her two faults: her love of the theatre and a taste for false jewelry.

Her friends (she was acquainted with some officer's wives) frequently procured for her a box at the theatre, often for the first representations of every new play; and her husband was obliged to accompany her, whether he willed or not, to these amusements which bored him excessively after his day's labor at the office.

After a time, M. Lautin begged his wife to request some of her lady acquaintance to accompany her.

She was at first opposed to such an arrangement; but after much persuasion on his part, she finally consented, to the infinite delight of her husband.

Now with her love for the theatre came also the desire to decorate her person. True, her costumes remained as before, simple, and of the most correct taste; but she soon began to adorn her ears with huge Rhinestones which glittered and sparkled like real diamonds. Around her neck she wore strings of false pearls, and on her arms bracelets of imitation gold.

Her husband frequently remonstrated with her, saying:

"My dear, as you cannot afford to buy real diamonds, you ought to appear adorned with your beauty and modesty alone, which are of the rarest ornaments of your sex."

But she would smile sweetly, and say:

"What can I do? I am so fond of jewelry. It is my only weakness. We cannot change our natures."

Then she would roll around her fingers the pearl necklace, hold up the bright gems for her husband's admiration, saying:

"Look! are they not lovely? One would swear they were real."

M. Lautin would then answer, smilingly:

"You have Bohemian tastes, my dear."

Often of an evening when they were enjoying a tête-

à-tête by the fireside, she would place on the tea table the leather box containing the "trash," as M. Lautin called it. She would examine the false gems with a passionate attention, as though they were in some way connected with a deep and secret joy; and she often persisted in passing a necklace around her husband's neck, and laughing heartily would exclaim: "How droll you look!" Then she would throw herself into his arms and kiss him affectionately.

One evening in winter, she attended the opera, and on her return was chilled through and through. The next morning, she coughed, and eight days later she died of inflammation of the lungs.

M. Lautin's despair was so great that his hair became white in one month. He wept unceasingly; his heart was lacerated with grief, and his mind haunted by the remembrance, the smile, the voice—by every charm of his beautiful, dead wife.

Time, the healer, did not assuage his grief. Often during office hours, while his colleagues were discussing the topics of the day, his eyes would suddenly fill with tears, and he would give vent to his grief in heart-rending sobs.

Every thing in his wife's room remained as before her decease; and here he was wont to seclude himself daily and think of her who had been his treasure—the joy of his existence.

But life soon became a struggle. His income, which in the hands of his wife covered all household expenses, was now no longer sufficient for his own immediate wants; and he wondered how she could have managed to buy such excellent wine and rare delicacies, which he could no longer procure with his modest resources.

He incurred some debts and was soon reduced to absolute poverty. One morning, finding himself without a cent in his pocket, he resolved to sell something, and, immediately the thought occurred to him of disposing of his wife's paste jewels; for he cherished in his heart a sort of rancor against the false gems which had always irritated him in the past.

The very sight of them spoiled somewhat the remembrance of his lost darling.

To the last days of her life, she had continued to make purchases; bringing home new gems almost every evening. He decided to sell the heavy necklace which she seemed to prefer, and which, he thought, ought to be worth about six or seven francs; for although paste, it was, nevertheless, of very fine workmanship.

He put it in his pocket and started out in search of a jeweller's shop. He entered the first one he saw; feeling a little ashamed to expose his misery, and also to offer such a worthless article for sale.

"Sir," said he to the merchant, "I would like to know what this is worth."

The man took the necklace, examined it, called his clerk and made some remarks in an undertone; he then put the ornament back on the counter, and looked at it from a distance to judge of the effect.

M. Lautin was annoyed by all those ceremonies, and was on the point of saying, "Oh! I know well enough it is not worth anything," when the jeweller said: "Sir, that necklace is worth from twelve to fifteen thousand francs; but I could not buy it unless you tell me from whence it comes."

The widower opened his eyes wide and remained gaping, not comprehending the merchant's meaning. Finally he stammered: "You say—are you sure?" The other replied drily: "You can search elsewhere and see if any one will offer you more. I consider it worth fifteen thousand at the most. Come back here if you cannot do better."

M. Lautin, beside himself with astonishment, took up the necklace and left the store. He wished time for reflection. Once outside, he felt inclined to laugh, and said to himself; "The fool! Oh, the fool! Had I only taken him at his word! That jeweller cannot distinguish real diamonds from paste."

A few minutes after, he entered another store in the Rue de la Paix. As soon as the proprietor glanced at the necklace, he cried out:

"Ah, parbleu! I know it well; it was bought here"

M. Lautin was disturbed, and asked: "How much is it worth?"

"Well, I sold it for twenty thousand francs. I am willing to take it back for eighteen thousand, when you inform me, according to our legal formality, how it came to be in your possession."

This time M. Lautin was dumbfounded. He replied:

"But—but—examine it well. Until this moment I was under the impression that it was—paste."

The jeweller asked: "What is your name, sir?"

"Lautin,—I am in the employ of the Minister of the Interior. I live at No. 16 Rue des Martyrs."

The merchant looked through his books, found the entry, and said: "That necklace was sent to Mme. Lautin's address, 16 Rue des Martyrs, July 20, 1876."

The two men looked into each other's eyes—the widower speechless with astonishment: the jeweller scenting a thief. The latter broke the silence.

"Will you leave this necklace here for twenty-four hours?" said he; "I will give you a receipt."

M. Lautin answered hastily: "Yes, certainly." Then putting the ticket in his pocket he left the store.

He wandered aimlessly through the streets, his mind in dreadful confusion. He tried to reason, to understand. His wife could not afford to purchase a costly ornament. Certainly not. But, then, it must have been a present!—a present from whom? Why was it given her?

He stopped and remained standing in the middle of the street. A horrible doubt entered his mind—She? Then all the other gems must have been presents, too! The earth seemed to tremble beneath him,—the tree before him was falling—throwing up his arms, he fell to the ground, unconcious. He recovered his senses in a pharmacy into which the pedestrians had borne him. He gave orders to be taken to his home. When he arrived he shut himself up in his room and wept until nightfall. Finally, overcome with fatigue, he threw himself on the bed where he passed a restless night.

The following morning he arose and prepared to go

to the office. It was hard work after such shocks. He sent a letter to his employer requesting to be excused. Then he remembered that he had to return to the jeweller's. He did not like the idea; but he could not leave the necklace with that man. He dressed and went out.

It was a lovely day; a clear blue sky smiled on the busy city below. Men of leisure were strolling about with their hands in their pockets.

M. Lautin, observing them, said to himself:

"The rich, indeed, are happy. With money it is possible to forget even the deepest sorrow. One can go where one pleases, and in travel find distraction which is the surest cure for grief. Oh! if I were only rich!"

He perceived that he was hungry, but his pocket was empty. He again remembered the necklace. Eighteen thousand francs! What a sum!

He soon arrived in the Rue de la Paix, opposite the jeweller's. Eighteen thousand francs! Twenty times he resolved to go in, but shame kept him back.

He was hungry, however,—very hungry, and not a cent in his pocket. He decided quickly, ran across the street in order not to have time for reflection, and rushed into the store.

The proprietor immediately came forward, and politely offered him a chair; the clerks glanced at him knowingly.

"I have made inquiries, M. Lautin," said the jeweller, "and if you are still resolved to dispose of the gems, I am ready to pay you the price I offered."

"Certainly, sir," stammered M. Lautin.

Whereupon the proprietor took from a drawer eighteen large bills, counted and handed them to M. Lautin, who signed a receipt and with trembling hand put the money into his pocket.

As he was about to leave the store, he turned towards the merchant, who still wore the same knowing smile, and lowering his eyes, said:

"I have—I have other gems, which I have received from the same source. Will you buy them also?"

The merchant bowed: "Certainly, sir." One of the clerks left the store to avoid laughing outright, another pressed his handkerchief to his mouth.

M. Lautin said gravely: "I will bring them to you."

An hour later he returned with the gems.

The large diamond ear-rings were worth twenty thousand francs, the bracelets thirty-five thousand, the rings sixteen thousand; a set of emeralds and sapphires fourteen thousand; a gold chain, with solitaire pendant, forty thousand—making the sum of one hundred and forty-three thousand francs.

The jeweller remarked, jokingly:

"That person invested all her savings in precious stones."

M. Lautin replied, seriously:

"It is only another way of investing one's money."

That day he lunched at Voisin's and drank wine worth twenty francs a bottle. Then he hired a carriage and made a tour of the Bois. He gazed at the various turnouts with a kind of disdain, and could hardly refrain from crying out to the occupants:

"I, too, am rich!—I am worth two hundred thousand francs."

Suddenly he thought of his employer. He drove up to the bureau, entered gayly, saying:

"Sir, I have come to resign my position; I have just inherited three hundred thousand francs."

He shook hands with his former colleagues, and confided to them some of his projects for the future; he then went off to dine at the Café Anglais.

He seated himself beside a gentleman of aristocratic bearing, and during the meal informed the latter confidentially that he had just inherited a fortune of four hundred thousand francs.

For the first time in his life he was not bored at the theatre, and spent the remainder of the night in dissipation.

Six months afterwards he married again. His second wife was a very virtuous woman; but with a violent temper. She caused him much sorrow.

It took an Irishman to find out that the way to deal with a ghost was to pay it back in its own coin. How Paddy did it, and what was the result, has been previously related in *Atalanta*, but is worth re-reading in ROMANCE.

THE HAUNTED GHOST.

"Will I tell ye the story of the Ballykillin ghost?" Faith, will I, your honor; but it's a mighty small matter, after all. He was a poor creature, was the same, and so's the lave o' them when you come to reckon 'em up. Sure, ghosts is nothing but shadows at all, and what harm is there in a shadow? None that I ever heard of, barrin' Pat Donovan's, that he struck with his blackthorn when he was coming home from Carrickmahon Fair, thinking it was some rascal that was following of him, and just sent his stick through Widow Mahoney's window, which cost him five shillings, worse luck, for mending the broken glass and frame.

Well, this is the truth of it, your honor. Ballykillin Castle was haunted by a ghost. Faith, it was, for I've seen it with nobody's eyes but my own. Och! he was the ghost of a big scoundrel, he was—the 'bad baronet' they called him, who betrayed his country in the time o' William of Orange, and was found dead one fine morning in his own courtyard, with a bullet through his wicked heart. Not a soul ever knew who did it; but, whoever it was, he had the blessings of all the country round; for he was a mighty great rascal, was Sir Roderick Shane. There never was a Shane like him before or since; for they're all been gentlemen, every baronet of them. And there was no finer gentleman in Ireland than my old colonel, Sir Peter Shane, who commanded the regiment I was out with in India before I got my discharge for being crippled in the left leg in a scrimmage with the Indians.

Bless the dear old Colonel! There wasn't a boy in

the regiment who wouldn't have died for him; and when he asked if there was ever a man with pluck enough to go up to the castle and see whether there was a ghost in it or not, it's ashamed of myself that I would have been if I hadn't been the first to volunteer for the job.

But I'm hurrying on a bit too fast. For you must know that Ballykillin Castle had been shut up and let go to waste for years upon years, all because of that murdering thieving old ghost, and so was the lovely demesne all around it, with its oak and beech trees and shady walks all grown over with weeds and rubbish, and its pretty gardens running wild for want of a gardener. For never a soul would go near the place, and the boys would walk miles out of their way of nights to give it a wide berth. Och! it was a pity, so it was entirely.

So Sir Peter, he says: "Here's this fine old house of mine all run to wrack and ruin because of a bit of stupid superstition"; and the brave old man would have gone himself to pass a night in the castle, to prove there was no ghost at all, only the good lady and the Miss Shanes wouldn't let him.

Well, then, when I said I would go into the castle after dark and see if there was a ghost or not, he just shook hands with me and said I was a bold lad, and if I did it he would give me and Bridget £50 to start housekeeping on when we were married. But I said I would do it for love of him and the family, not for the money, though sure that same would come in hand for the wedding.

But Biddy, when she heard what I was after, threw her arms around my neck and held me fast, saying:

"Och! Timothy, darling, sure you'll never go and do such a thing. You'll be kilt and murdered, that's what you'll be, and leave me a widow before we are married."

"Faith, no," says I, "the ghost won't hurt me, if there is one; and if there isn't, the Colonel can get into the castle and live among us, and needn't be an absentee any more at all."

"But, och!" says Biddy, "if the ghost doesn't kill you, sure he'll frighten you out of your blessed wits, and it's a poor deluded lunatic that I shall have for a husband all my days."

Well, your honor, it was mighty hard work that I had to quiet the colleen, and persuade her to let me go without any more howling. And all the folks in Ballykillin, when they saw me march off to the castle with my stick and my bag of victuals over my shoulder, swore I'd never come back again with my wits about me, even if I didn't leave my corpse behind.

But I'd faced the black niggers out in India, and I didn't think there was a ghost half as ugly or vicious as the best of them. I heard ghost stories galore in my time, and never knew of one where anything worse happened than a bit of a fright; and sure, thinks I, if you're not frightened, what harm can come to you at all?

So I marched up to the castle with never a twitter of the heart, whistling "Finnigan's Wake," just for company's sake, and ready to face all the ghosts in the bad place or out of it. The rusty iron gates at the entrance of the demesne were hanging loose on their hinges, and the pretty lodge was all in ruins, with the creeping ivy growing over it. The road under the big trees up the avenue was all covered with weeds and brambles, and a mighty big pond that you passed lay under a sheet of nasty green stuff that had gathered on it for years.

And the castle stood out grim and gray against the blood-red sunset behind, just like the haunted houses that you see in the picture-books. But it didn't daunt me, with all its queer looks; so I marched straight up to the old door and put in the key. It wanted a twist, I tell you, to turn the key in the lock, but I soon got the door open, and then I was in the dark old hall, all as quiet as a churchyard, barring the scuttering of the rats and bats which I set flying, without "by your leave."

Then I stepped up the old staircase, and, och! how

it cracked and creaked under my feet; and little wonder, for it hadn't been trodden on by mortal feet for maybe a hundred years or more. And so I went on through the old rooms and galleries with never a bit of furniture in them, barring a rickety chair and table here and there, and a bit of ragged tapestry and rusty armor on the walls. Faith! it was a pity to see such a fine place all full of nothing at all, and the sight of it put the courage into my heart to try and get the ghost out.

I went into one room after the other, illigant places with chimney-pieces all covered with figures, and ceilings painted and divided off into squares, just like a palace. But never a one had a sound window in it, for all the glass was broken and smashed as though there had been an election or a pattern fair outside. At last I come to one that was pretty weather-tight, and there I made myself snug for the night. I got in some old furniture, and broke it up for a fire in the grate, keeping a table and chair for myself to have my supper; and then I sat down and lighted my pipe and waited for the ghost.

Och! it was all nice and quiet, and the moon came out and peeped through the window, as much as to say, "Tim Macarthy, my boy, sure I've come to keep you company." I knew I would see nothing of the ghost, if he came at all, till midnight, as that was his time to appear; so the folks said. He was as regular as the rent collector, was that ghost, if you was to believe all you heard, and never stayed a minute after sunrise; so I thought I knew just when to expect him.

Sure enough, just as the clock, far off, struck the last stroke of midnight I heard a queer noise.

"What's that, anyhow?" I says to myself. For it was such a sound as I never before heard in my life. It was like some poor creature groaning, worse than any of the wounded on the battle-field, with just the touch of a wail now and then like a howl at a wake, but more dismal.

"Faith!" thinks I, "the ghost is coming."

So I put myself in a genteel position, with one leg crossed over my knee, and kept my pipe in my mouth and held my head up, so as to look becoming when the ghost appeared. Then I sat and listened, and presently I heard a creaking of the boards, such as I made myself when I was coming up the old stairs.

Well, your honor, the sounds of the groaning and the creaking came nearer and nearer, and got louder and louder every minute; and if I said my heart wasn't beginning to beat a bit, sure I would be telling ye a lie. But I kept up my courage as well as I could, telling myself there was nothing to be afraid of, and that as I had come to do this job I must go through with it.

So I was cool as the process-server when they introduced him into the river; and, by my soul, I needed to be that, when I tell you what happened next. As I live, the door just in front of me swung slowly open, bit by bit, with never a hand that I could see to set it moving; and when it was wide open, there, in the full light of the moon, stood a figure that looked just awful.

It was the ghost, sure enough. It was the shadow of the "Red Baronet," Sir Roderick Shane, dressed as he was two hundred years ago, when they put a bullet into him for his behavior. He had on an elegant green coat slashed with gold lace, and under it a white frilled shirt with an ugly stain over the left breast. There was a long wig on his head reaching down over his shoulders, and he had knee-boots, with spurs, on his legs, and a sword by his side.

But, faith! it was not his figure, nor yet his dress, that looked so queer. It was his face, white and pasty, like that of a corpse, and his horrible dead eyes with never a bit of light in them, his bloodless lips parted and showing a row of ugly black teeth, that sent a shiver through me in spite of myself. I wasn't afraid, though—niver a bit! and I hadn't looked at him for about a minute or two before I got used to him entirely.

Well, he stood and glared at me as I sat and looked at him, with my leg crossed over my knee, and my pipe

in my mouth. I took out that last, so as I could say something civil to him; but never a limb did I move.

"Good evening, your honor!" says I. "Sure, you must be the ghost of the bad—I beg your honor's pardon—of Sir Roderick Shane, I mean."

"Man," cried the ghost in a hollow voice, "do you dare sit there in my presence?"

"Faith," says I, "I do. Why wouldn't I?"

"Do you not know," says he, "what fearful risks you run?"

"No," says I, "I don't; and would be much obliged for particulars of the same."

"Your reason," says he, "your very life, is in danger."

"Well! now," says I, "you don't say that? Sure I'd like to know how you make it out."

"At a word from me," says the ghost, "you might be driven into raving madness or drivelling idiocy. I could blast you as by a lightning stroke, or crush you into dust."

"Indade, then," says I, "it's lucky for me you don't."

"But," says he, "I cannot long forbear."

"Can't you," says I. "Well, then, if I may ask without offense, how long will you be forbearing?"

"Until to-morrow night," says he. "You have intruded here, no doubt, in ignorance. Begone at once, and I will spare you, but never again presume to trespass on my domain."

Well, the ghost, talking in this way of the old Colonel's property as his domain, began to get my blood up. But I kept as cool as I could and said: "Sure it's very good of your honor to let me off so easy, but I ask your pardon if I say this is not your domain at all. It used to be, I allow, but it belongs now to my old Colonel, Sir Peter Shane, God bless him!—and as I am here under his orders, here I mean to stay."

"Fool!" cried the ghost, and then he gave one of his dismal groans.

This was more than I could put up with, even from the ghost of one of the quality.

"Now, look here, ghost," says I. "Don't you begin of calling names, because two can play at that game, and I know the trick of it. Sure, I've as good a right to be here as you have, and better. Indeed, you've no business to be here at all. The castle don't belong to you now, and you've kept all decent folk out of it ever since you got that piece of lead between your ribs. Why don't you keep quiet and easy in your comfortable grave, and leave the old place alone?"

"How dare you address me thus?" says the ghost. "You—a mean, common soldier! dare you speak to me like this—to me, a gentleman, the head of an ancient house, to whom you might, in days gone by, have been the basest menial in his service?"

This wasn't civil, but I kept my temper.

"Yes, ghost," says I, "that's right enough. All that might have been long ago, before you was done for; but, sure, times has changed since then, and I dare do a deal now that would have been a liberty once."

"Vile dog!" said the ghost, "I will parley with you no longer. But, once more, beware how you trespass here again. If I discover you within these walls to-morrow night your doom is death. Farewell!"

"A good night to your honor," says I, getting up for the first time, so as to be a bit civil now he was departing.

Then I heard him go creaking and groaning along the passage till the sound of him was lost in the distance.

I couldn't help bursting out laughing. I slapped my thigh, and says to myself: "Faith! I've had the best of him this time, anyhow."

Well, I thought I would see no more of him that night, so I just curled myself up on the big seat in the window, and soon was fast asleep.

Och! murder! you should have seen the folks when I walked through the village of Ballykillin the next morning. If I'd have been a ghost myself they couldn't have looked more scared, and it was some time before they would come near me or touch me. But Biddy

came running out, and threw her arms around me in the open street and before all the people.

"Och! Tim, darlin'," she says, "and have you come back alive and left none of your wits behind you? Och, praise be to the saints for this mercy! But don't go near the bad place again; don't, Tim, darlin'."

Then she went on to ask if I had seen the ghost, and so did all the neighbors and the Colonel himself. But niver a word would I tell them of what I had seen. I kept my mouth shut till the next night, and after that, too, and just an hour or so before midnight started off for the castle again.

I made myself snug once more in that room with the sound window, and waited for the ghost. It struck midnight at last, and I listened for the groanings and creakings, but niver a sound could I hear.

"Well," I says to myself, "the ghost's getting into bad habits. I shall have to tell him to keep better time."

One o'clock came, and still there wasn't the ghost of a ghost.

"What's up now, I wonder?" says I. "Sure, he hasn't cleared out of this already. Perhaps he's gone to get some other ghost to come and help turn me out, and can't find one at liberty. Well, I'll give him till sunrise, anyhow."

But the sun rose, and never a token of the ghost could I see or hear. So I just rolled myself up again on the window-seat and had a sleep.

It was the same again the third night, and, faith, I began to get uneasy.

"What's become of him now, I wonder?" thinks I. Then, when I had considered a bit over the matter, I says to myself, "Sure, he's hiding away somewhere. I must go and see what he's after at all."

So I takes up my candle and walks along the passage and across the great hall, till I got to the east wing of the castle. There I stood and listened a bit. Sure enough, I heard a groan, but a long way off.

So I shouted out, "Hallo! ghost; where are you at all?"

It was at the end of the long gallery in the east wing that I found my gentleman at last. There he was, looking out through the window, as though he was admiring the pretty country under the moonlight. But he didn't seem enjoying himself, poor creature, and kept on groaning worse than ever. "What a chap you are for groaning!" says I, "as though that could do any good. If you're sorry for what you used to do when you were alive, why can't you think it over and keep quiet?"

As soon as the ghost heard me, he turned about, and, if you'll believe me, he looked fairly startled.

"Why do you trouble me, man?" he says. "Begone, and leave me in peace."

"Och!" thinks I, "is that your tune? It's a very different sort of note from what you sang the other night." So I says:

"Sure I am waiting for some of those terrible things you threatened to do to me. When are you going to begin?"

"Base slave!" says the ghost, clapping his hand on his ghost of a sword.

"Wirrasthrew!" says I, "it's no use your doing that, anyway. Your sword can't do more harm than this pipe of mine; not so much, and you know it."

You should have seen the look of the ghost's face as I said these words. He seemed just bursting with passion; his eyes opened wide, but they couldn't flash, as all the fire had gone out of them long ago. Sure, no one ever saw a ghost in such a rage before.

Then he threw a look of contempt on me, and turned on his heel and made off. He didn't run exactly, for that would not be genteel in a ghost, but he slipped away pretty quick, and I had a bit of trouble to keep up with him, with my lame leg. But I followed him pretty close through one gallery after another, and at last he stopped short.

"Soldier," said he, more quiet and civil than ever he had been before, "I beg that you will leave me in peace. My doom is terrible, condemned as I am to

walk the earth by night in expiation of my crimes. Why add to my awful punishment?"

"Why?" says I. "Sure, don't I want to get you out of this place; here, as I said before, you've got no business to be, and which belongs to my old Colonel. If you must haunt something, go and haunt some old ruins that nobody lives in, and not a decent castle like this, that only wants a bit of plumbing and carpentering to be made all snug and comfortable for living folks."

"I can not leave it," says the ghost; "it is my home. It would increase my punishment tenfold were I doomed to haunt a strange abode."

"Faith!" says I, "I don't care a straw for that. But if you won't come out of this, sure I'll turn the tables on you and haunt you every night, whether you like it or not."

Och, the groan the ghost gave when I said this! It was the best I had heard yet. Then the creature was off again, and I followed him up till sunrise, when he melted away like butter in the pan.

Well, I had rare sport with him. Night after night I hunted him up, and left him no peace at all. Sometimes I talked to him, and sometimes I didn't; but I was always at his heels, chasing him round the castle, and driving him fair crazy. It went some against the grain with me to worry the ghost of a gentleman-born in this way; but I thought of my dear Colonel, and I never let him be. Heaven forgive me for the hard words I gave to that poor ghost; the bad names I called him, insulting him worse and worse every night. Och! I led him a life.

At last one night he turned on me, and, says he, in a pitiful tone which pretty nigh went to my heart:

"Will nothing make you cease this persecution?"

"Well," says I, "that depends. What have you to offer?"

"What can I offer?" says he.

"Why now," says I, "look here, ghost. Couldn't you put me up to a good thing? Don't you know of a

hidden treasure somewhere? I have heard that ghosts often do that."

"I know of none," says he, looking very sad and sorry.

"Well," says I, "I thought you could do nothing, and was only trying of you. I don't want any treasures. I only want you to get out of this place, and so, if need be, I mean to haunt you as long as I live."

"Ah," says the ghost, "there is comfort in that."

"Is there indeed?" says I. "How do you make that out?"

"You will continue to haunt me as long as you live?" says he. "Be it so. But do you forget? What is your miserable speck of life to mine? Have I not lived in the spirit for nigh two hundred years, and shall I not thus exist to all eternity? The little that is left of your base life is but a drop in the ocean of my own. For that short space I must be patient."

I could scarcely keep myself from laughing in his face, for I knew that was what he'd be coming to, and I was ready for him.

"Och," says I, "that's how you look at it, is it? Sure, thin, ye made a big mistake entirely."

"What mean you?" says the ghost, and I could see that he was bothered all over.

"Sure I'll show you what I mean to-morrow night," says I, "if I live, please God."

Well, he couldn't get a word more out of me, for I had got a scheme up my sleeve which I meant to keep to myself for the present.

Now, Biddy O'Rourke, my pretty sweetheart, bless her! had a bit of a younger brother, fourteen years old or thereabouts, who was always getting into scrapes and mischief, breaking windows and chasing the pigs, and fighting the other boys as bold as a soldier.

So when I goes down to the village again, I gets Thady into a corner all quiet, and nobody by, and says I: "Whist! Thady, my boy; would you like to see the ghost?"

Thady he turned pale a bit at first, and then those

wicked young eyes of his lighted up, full of mischief, and he grinned.

"Sure, Tim," says he, "that would I. Is there a ghost, then, anyway?"

Then I up and told him all about the "Bad Baronet," and what a poor creature he was, with never a ha'porth of harm in him; and how I'd been chivying him all around the castle night after night, till I'd half worried the life out of him. And Thady laughed, and was just mad to go with me and see the ghost. By St. Patrick! that boy had no more fear in him than there is in an old wooden gate-post, and he never shook a limb when we got into the castle.

"Who is this urchin?" says Sir Roderick, fuming and glaring in the old way.

"Och!" says I, "shame on my bad manners for not introducing him. This is Thady O'Rourke, my brother-in-law that is to be, and he has come here to help me with this job."

"I do not understand you," says the ghost, looking more bothered than ever.

"Maybe you don't," says I; "but I'll soon make you. I have brought this boy with me to help me to haunt you, and he's just coming here with me, night after night, to learn the business, so he can take it up when I've done with it."

Never a word did the ghost say; but he started back a step or so and gave a groan.

"And," says I, "that won't be the end of it; for Thady when he grows up, and I am under the turf, will just get another boy like himself—there's lashings of them about—to learn the business, and take his place after him, and so it will go on if you stay here forever. Arrah! now, ghost, how do you like that lookout, anyway?"

Och! the poor ghost was a sight to be seen just then. He stamped and he swore, and he fumed, and he scowled at Thady; but it was all of no use, for Thady, seeing he couldn't do any harm, laughed in his pasty face, and was mad to worry him.

Well, we led him a pretty dance that night and the night after; and Thady just enjoyed the fun, he did.

We hadn't been at it for more than a week or so, when one night we couldn't find the ghost anywhere.

We tramped through all the galleries, upstairs and downstairs; but it was all quiet, and never a creaking or a groaning or a token of a ghost did we see.

"What's become of him, anyhow?" says Thady

"Whist!" says I, "look yonder, Thady!"

And, och! it was a pretty sight that we saw. For down in the long walk, between the trees, what should we see but the old ghost, with his sword tucked under his arm, and his bundle on his shoulder, walking on as fast as he could tread, with his old wig trailing down his back behind and his spurs gleaming in the moonlight.

"By the powers, Thady!" says I, "we have made him clear out at last."

And we both shouted out of the window together as loud as we could:

"A good-night to you, ghost, and a safe and pleasant journey!"

Well, if you believe me, Thady and I watched night after night up at the old castle, to see if the ghost was to change his mind and come back; but never a token of him did we discover. He was gone for good and all, and then we let the secret out to the neighbors and the Colonel and all the country round. At first they wouldn't believe it, but sure they couldn't hold out long, for the Colonel himself went up to the castle at night with us, and saw the ghost wasn't there at all, which showed it was true as a miracle.

And then what doings they had! Sir Peter, he brought down builders and carpenters and gardeners from Dublin, and had the old castle made as good as new, and all the ugly weeds pulled up out of the pretty walks and gardens. Then they furnished the place like any palace, and the family came down and lived in it, and gave a ball to all the quality for miles around.

And the Colonel was as good as his word, and better;

for when Biddy and me was married he gave us the £50 he promised, and situations at the castle, with nothing to do but to keep the old ghost out.

As for Thady, he had a job, too, on the demesne; and proud he was of the work he'd done, helping to make the eviction. And I gathered a lot of other lads about me one day, and I says to them, says I—

"Look here, boys, don't you take heed of ghosts, or any such like. The world's just full of 'em, and there's not a ha'porth of harm in 'em if you pluck up and face 'em and show 'em you ain't afraid. Half the troubles and botherations o'life is nothing but ghosts, and if you let 'em haunt you they'll do it; but if you turn round and laugh at 'em, it won't be long before they take themselves off like the morning mists before the blessed sun."

A curious instance of the old paradox, killing no murder, translated for ROMANCE from *Le Petit Journal*, of Paris, by Edyth Kirkwood.

SUGGESTION.

"What do you think of it, doctor?" asked the prisoner's counsel.

The physician, a celebrated specialist and authority on mental diseases, shook his head gravely in a non-committal sort of way.

"You followed up the clue I gave you?" persisted the lawyer.

"Yes."

"And you think——?"

"I shall examine him again to-day," replied the doctor. "I have seen several experts in the new science and they all agree that poor Julian is an impressionable subject, a ready-made victim to any one who might have wished this deed done by proxy; but the motive? Probably some lover's quarrel, some revenge; they say the girl was pretty and coquettish. There is something baffling about the affair," added the doctor with a slight relaxation of his professional caution. "While I have never had too much confidence in this idea of 'suggestion,' I am not prepared to say there is nothing in it."

"Let me go with you to-day, doctor. I will slip in without speaking, listen to the story he relates, and one of us may chance on some word or idea to give us the indication we seek."

So it was agreed.

"How do you feel to-day?" asked the doctor kindly, as they entered the prisoner's cell.

The man was lying on his hard bed, staring in front of him, with hollow, vacant eyes.

"My thoughts," he replied, "flutter about aimlessly; sad, oh! sad as long snow-covered plains under the

light of the moon. I have worn myself out with walking to and fro. My limbs ache as if I had been beaten. I feel very cold, but the palms of my hands are burning with fever, and I have a dull pain at the base of my brain."

The physician nodded gravely and said a few soothing words, then requested the patient to relate all he could remember about the crime.

"But, doctor," objected Julian, "I have already told you twenty times and more. It will be monotonous to go over all that again, though, to be sure, there is nothing better to do here. . . Well then, place yourself there, opposite to me, so that you will hide that white wall; it looks to me like a canvas on which is painted thatun fading image: the coffer with the head upon it! . . . When you go away my terror will return. If they would only soil that wall a little; it seems to me the slightest stain would obviate this fancy. . . . I tried to soil it, and the jailer scolded me as if I had been a schoolboy."

"Go on with your story," said the doctor quietly.

"I was walking along aimlessly when from a long, dark, narrow street I emerged on the thoroughfare. Lights were shining here and there under the trees like great flowers of flame. The yelling of showmen, the music and bells of the merry-go-rounds, the trumpets and drums, hurdy-gurdys and squeaking playthings of the children made a most horrible din, for the annual festival was in full tide.

"Cornered by a group of curious people, I was crowded and crushed, raised off my feet and carried along before a booth. Above the door I read the word: *Metempsychosis.*

"A fat man was selling tickets; he was pitted by small-pox and had one eye smaller than the other.

"Inside it was very, almost quite, dark.

"Before us a square of light opened in the canvas which was stretched at the further end of the booth. Within this frame appeared a table with a gauze screen separating it from the spectators.

"The fat man passed around a pasteboard head such as milliners use for bonnets. When it had gone from hand to hand and was acknowledged to be truly what it appeared to be, he placed it on the table and fastened the gauze screen. The light brightened; by transitions impossible to catch, without anything seeming to move, as the man announced a transformation the pasteboard head turned into a vase full of flowers, then into a cage full of birds, after that into a death's head which became the mask of celebrated statues representing successively Venus, Juno, Cleopatra, Anne of Austria, Marie Antoinette, and so on and on, until the showman said: 'Instead of pasteboard and stucco you shall now see living flesh.'

"Slowly the face dislocated, the features became hazy, confused, to form again little by little and appear distinct, animated, *humanized*.

"'An ingenious trick,' I thought; 'I don't even care to know if it is accomplished by the aid of mirrors.'

"The head of a young girl, sweet and fair, had formed behind the gauze. She opened her great black eyes, which, without definite expression, followed me with the strange fixity of a portrait, while across her face flitted the rather silly smile of the antique statues.

"This steady stare seemed to turn me to stone. My limbs grew rigid. I felt very strangely, though it was neither fatigue nor pain, and there was something oddly familiar about the head. Where I could have seen it before under different circumstances and in different attire I can no more remember now than I could then.

"When the crowd of spectators left, I remained. The showman seemed surprised, but sold me another ticket.

"I remained through another representation. When the young girl appeared in the last act I experienced the same singular sensation of torpor, and could not move hand or foot until she vanished from the square.

"The showman walked toward the door and I followed him.

"'Why, I asked, 'did you write *Metempsychosis* on your sign instead of *Metamorphosis?*'

"'Then I must have been mistaken!' he said. 'Bah! never mind; very few will know the difference.'

Profiting by a push of the crowd, I slipped behind him and hid against the canvas. He went out saying:

"'Don't be impatient, Milie; I am going out to get something for supper.'

"I raised the canvas. On a large coffer, covered with some Algerian stuff and ornamented with copper nails, I saw the pasteboard head. A young girl, tall and thin, dressed in a gray wrapper, was combing the long hair that fell over her face. She threw back her hair as she heard my step and recoiled so that the floor of the booth rattled. It seemed to me as if she was trying to break through the boards to escape from me. She looked pale, supernaturally pale. It might have been an effect of light, for the gas was directly above her head.

"I gazed alternately at her bloodless face and at the white face of the manikin; they seemed to grow confused in my mind.

"The girl's eyes shone, haggard and dilated like those of a somnambulist. Her pallid lips moved:

"'You have come to kill me?'

"'Kill you? Nonsense! What weapon could I use?' I remember, laughing as I said these words, . . . and that is all. . . ."

"Collect your mind. Force your memory to obey you," said the doctor anxiously.

"That is all I can remember. The next thing I recall is that a man's hands closed around my throat and the man was shrieking with sorrow. His grasp must have been furious, yet I felt nothing.

"Over his shoulder I peered about to see the coffer without trying at all to free myself. The coffer was still in the corner, and the head was still on top of it. There was blood on the floor. The head looked like the pale young girl. Beside it lay a shining sword of curious shape, like an African weapon."

"The sword was in the booth," explained the physi-

cian; "you took it to cut off the girl's head. Then you substituted her head for that of the manikin. All that was accomplished with a strength and rapidity only explicable by vertigo—temporary insanity—aberration, call it what you please."

"Decidedly, you insist upon it as firmly as the examining magistrate," said Julian. "Yet I can never admit myself guilty of an act I am unconscious of having done."

"You were out of your mind," said the doctor. "What happened next?"

"I remember gendarmes with drawn swords. . . A walk past the booths of the showmen. And I think they hooted and jeered. All the clamor mingled and confounded and became one great sound of rushing waves, then that noise resolved itself into a harmonious concert with dominating chords of deep, sweet sound. . . . After that I found myself here, and you know the rest. You, doctor, felt my pulse, my forehead, and questioned me searchingly; but without succeeding in establishing my irresponsibility. I have never been subject to epilepsy, nor to somnambulism, and my brain is not diseased. My own opinion? I have given it and been laughed at. Yet if I really did this hideous thing I am accused of, the very thought of which freezes the blood in my veins, then I have been the instrument of another's crime, a victim of *suggestion*. I am excessively nervous and susceptible to hypnotic influence, and have submitted to experiments until I have become a 'good subject.' I have no hope of this theory being accepted. I offer it merely as my own conviction."

"Have you arrived at any conclusion?" asked the lawyer three days after, as he entered the doctor's office with a curious expression on his keen face, and a certain pallor and subdued excitement that at once attracted the physician's attention.

"Why no; I am just where I was," replied the latter. "I can make nothing of it. And you? You have found some solution?"

"The solution—the motive—all," said the prisoner's counsel, unfolding a package of manuscript. "The girl had been insane, melancholy, suicidal mania, and all that; but had been cured, as it was supposed, and was not considered dangerous. The *idée fixe*, however, still enthralled her brain, and, like all demented women, the more fantastic the *mise en scène* of the crime, the better it would please her warped imagination. She conceived the idea of employing hypnotism, attended lectures and *séances*, and became an expert pupil. At one of these pseudo scientific gatherings, which were frequented by some medical students of the Latin quarter, she met Julian and—incredible as it seems—hypnotized him and suggested her own murder. This MS., found a few hours ago among her effects, contains a calm statement of the facts, and completely exonerates the prisoner."

Love affects men variously. When one man blunders and stumbles, another is alert, and full of resources. The hero of Mrs. Frank Penny's story, which is here republished from *London Society*, was of the latter sort. He did not have much chance to be heroic, but he was prompt, which was more important, as the occasion did not admit of delay.

SOLD FOR A SILK RAG.

"There is an hour in each man's life appointed
To make his happiness, if then he seize it."
—*Beaumont and Fletcher.*

It was New Year's Eve at one of the gay military stations of the Central Provinces, India. The ball, given by the officers of the 124th, was in full swing. The large dining-room of the mess bungalow had been turned out and decorated as a ball-room.

Supper was laid in a tent hard by; and now, at a quarter to twelve, the guests were assembling round the well-supplied tables.

The 124th always did things well, but to-night they surpassed themselves, for the general of the division was present. He was a favorite with them all, and they delighted to do him honor. He very rarely gave them the benefit of his company in holiday time; but this was a special occasion; necessity had obliged him to make a tour of inspection at this season.

"Isn't it rather rash of us choosing this night of all others for keeping late hours?" whispered a pretty girl to her partner, as she drew off her long white gloves preparatory to tasting the savory mock turtle.

"I won't matter for once in a way," he replied; "you need not get up till you please."

"Indeed! And do you suppose for a moment that I could let our regiment parade on New Year's morning without being present? you must have a poor opinion of my *esprit de corps! Of course* I shall get up. Six o'clock, isn't it?"

"A quarter past."

The handsome young fellow by her side looked down into her eyes, and whispered something which brought the color to her cheeks. His manner, too, was suggestive of happy appropriation; and a stranger would have guessed at the existence of a stronger bond between the two than friendship.

They were not engaged, though they were both desperately in love with each other. Alas! the course of true love did not run smooth in their case; a stern father barred the road to bliss, and caused poor Aimée many heartaches and tears.

But Captain Hamilton was an audacious lover. Such a trifle as the opposition of a stern parent troubled his mind but little. Truth to say, it rather added to the zest of his courtship. Even at this moment the eye of the unsympathetic colonel was upon the young couple with strong disapproval.

The murmur of voices round the supper table increased. Under cover of the noise Aimée said:

"I wish you wouldn't talk like that; you know it is of no use."

"I know nothing of the sort," he replied quickly. "Did you ever yet meet a soldier who was frightened off the field in love or war? Your father will not be able to subdue me with a stare."

"He is looking so annoyed."

"My little darling, you need not be so alarmed. Eat a good supper and drink your champagne; then you will be better prepared to listen to all I have to say to-night—and I have a great deal to say," he concluded impressively.

She gave him a quick apprehensive glance.

"Oh! George!" she protested.

"You heard the good news this morning—that I got my step? Here, try of this *pâté-de-foi-gras aspic;* it looks uncommonly good."

He helped her as he spoke. He was the most self-possessed young man, this Captain Hamilton; quite capable of making a good supper and love at the same time.

"Yes I was told, and I am very glad. I congratulate you. It will compensate a little for your having left the regiment to go into the Staff Corps. I wonder why father hates the Staff Corps so?"

"Because it robs him of his most promising youngsters. How bitterly opposed he was to my going! and all because he thought that in the far, far distance I might make a good adjutant to the regiment. I have been adjutant of the 50th N. I. for the last two years; and now I have got my step."

"Yes; I suppose that in a pecuniary way you have done well;" and she sighed.

He lowered his voice and said impressively:

"Aimée, I can afford to keep a wife now."

But the girl looked distressed at his words, and the suspicion of a tear dimmed her eye.

"Oh, George, my father will never give his consent. You know that he never will."

"He shall give his consent—I intend to make him. See if I don't, you poor frightened little darling! Do you think that stern fathers are never conquered? Only you must have patience. Here, have some more champagne, and some of this trifle. There's nothing like a good meal to build up one's courage. Hallo! what are they doing now? Oh! twelve o'clock, is it? Silence for the C. O. and the general!"

Glasses were filled; short speeches were made; and the gong tolled out the hour. Then each turned to his neighbor and good wishes were exchanged. The babel of voices recommenced with the ushering in of the new year.

Very shortly afterwards Captain Hamilton was piloting his companion from the tent to a dimly lighted little ante-room. There, wholly hidden by a large group of crotons, he had his say.

His love-making, like his soldiering, was untainted by timidity or faint-heartedness. It was useless for Aimée to doubt or fear; he would listen to nothing. Unable to resist his pleading, she caught something of

his hope and enthusiasm, and gave herself up to the enjoyment of the hour.

"A last kiss, and then one turn round the room before that waltz finishes," said George with a happy sigh.

But it was not to be. Gentle Mrs. Baring approached her daughter with a troubled face.

"Oh, Aimée! I have been looking for you everywhere. Your father says that we must go home. He has managed to take cold, and is already quite choking. It is so trying, because he *must* be on parade to-morrow morning. The general will be there and he cannot get off it."

Colonel Baring, who commanded the 124th, was not a man to shirk his duty. His only anxiety now was to get home and apply the usual remedies, in the earnest hope that the troublesome ailment might be staved off. He was annoyed that the necessity had arisen for turning his back on his guests. He would have liked to have seen the ball out. He was also annoyed with the attentions Captain Hamilton had shown his daughter at supper; and the offense was aggravated by the disappearance of the young couple immediately afterwards. This, together with his embryo cold, conduced to bad temper; and made the drive home anything but pleasant for wife and daughter. He did not dislike Captain Hamilton personally. On the contrary, the colonel recognized in him an unusually smart soldier; but he loathed the Indian Staff Corps. Its higher pay and richer plums lured the young subalterns from the Queen's regiments; and, in his time, he had seen at least a dozen youngsters go from the 124th alone. They had no business, in his opinion, to leave the regiment. It was only debt or love which made them do it. Why couldn't the Staff Corps be properly recruited without having to steal men from British regiments, just as they were beginning to know their work?

Poor Aimée had to listen to a tirade on the subject as they drove home to their bungalow. She knew only too well what it all meant; and, unsupported by her

lover, she was thrown back into the old despair. How could George overcome such prejudice? It would be impossible. She knew her father better than he did. It would need nothing short of a miracle to accomplish it.

Colonel Baring put his feet in hot mustard and water and tried all the well-known old household remedies, so fraudulent, so futile in most cases. The sleepy servants were aroused from their warm blankets and sent flying in different directions; one for hot water, another for the whiskey bottle, a third for the travelling-rugs, a fourth for sweet spirits of nitre.

In their anxiety to please the somewhat imperious master, they brought remedies enough to have treated a whole company of men with influenza.

Mrs. Baring and Aimée ministered patiently and gently to their wheezing patient, until—fortunately for all parties concerned—he fell asleep amongst his blankets and was at peace; at peace except for the portentous snore that shook his frame.

Very early in the morning, before it was light, the ayah crept to the door of the bedroom with the tea tray.

"I am afraid your master is no better; his breathing is very thick," said Mrs. Baring, in answer to the ayah's inquiring look; "however, he must go on parade. I hope his uniform is laid out ready; and tell the butler to see that the horse is saddled in good time."

Mrs. Baring returned to the bedside and found her husband awake. He was already firing off his *feu de joie* on Proclamation morning in a volley of sneezes.

"Oh! confound this cold! Get me out some old soft silk handkerchiefs. I feel as if my head would burst," he cried, as soon as he could speak.

Dressing this morning was no easy matter. Never had man a worse or more weeping cold. Every now and again a fit of sneezing held him speechless in its grip. It was with the greatest difficulty that he got himself into his uniform, drank his tea, and buckled on his sword. He was convinced, in spite of all his wife could say to the contrary, that he was late. He blus-

tered out of the house, mounted his charger, and galloped to the parade ground.

The English troops were drawn up in line on the opposite side, and on their left the native regiments were in position. All was ready for the eagle eye of the general.

Colonel Baring pulled up as he reached the ground.

The general had not yet arrived. It was a relief and a respite, for it would give him time to blow that much afflicted nose of his once more. The morning air was sharp, for the sun was only just touching the horizon, and—confound it all! there was another fit of sneezing coming on!

Where was his handkerchief? Now, *where* had he put it in the bustle of dressing?"

He felt in the cuff of each sleeve. It was not there. He stuck his fingers in the breast of his tunic; of course it was not there; he never carried it in such a place. He looked round at his horsekeeper. No, he did not remember having given it to him to hold.

Horror of horrors! He had come without it! What was he to do?

The knowledge that he had no handkerchief seemed to increase his cold, bad as it already was. The sneezing became more frequent, and, dash it all! his nose began to run!

What would the general say? Never did there exist a sharper eye for appearance than his. The slightest speck would be detected, and the scarlet uniform would show every spot.

It was most distressing, absurd though it may seem. Each moment the value of handkerchiefs rose in his eyes. There is no telling what sum he would not have given for one at that moment. His eyes were affected now, and the landscape was blurred by his influenza-bred tears.

He was riding slowly past the 70th N. I. (to get to his men he would have to pass all the sepoys), and he saw Colonel Smyth at the head of the regiment with two or three of his officers. He rode up to him.

"Can you lend me such a thing as a handkerchief?" he asked in his most conciliatory tones. "I have come without mine, and I have got the most infernal cold in my head."

Colonel Smyth looked a little surprised at such a strange request.

"I have only one, my dear fellow; and, as I have a slight cold also, I really daren't part with it. Have you one, major?" he said, turning to a fellow officer.

"Very sorry; I haven't one to spare."

Colonel Baring's dislike to the Staff Corps was well known, and none of the men asked felt inclined to make a sacrifice on his behalf. And it would have been a sacrifice to have parted with one's only handkerchief on such a cold morning.

Another and yet another officer was asked, but with no better success.

In the distance the general might be seen approaching. It was time—handkerchief or no handkerchief—that Colonel Baring took up his position, for it was to him that the general would first come.

Disheartened by his want of success, and distressed by his constant sneezing, he was passing the 50th without a word. A familiar voice at his elbow cried:

"Good morning, colonel. A happy new year to you! How is your cold?"

"Oh, Hamilton, is that you? Thanks, I'm not at all well. I think I must have the real thing—the real influenza this time. I don't know when I have felt so bad; and, worse luck, I've forgotten my pocket-handkerchief. I suppose you couldn't lend me such a thing?"

There was not much hope in the words as he uttered them. He had been very short and ungracious with the young man over night, even though he was his guest. It was hardly likely that he would feel very good-naturedly disposed towards him this morning.

"Oh, I can't exactly give it you, for I have only one. But I tell you what, I'll share it with you."

And Captain Hamilton drew out of his sleeve a large

soft, comforting silk handkerchief, the very sight of which was soothing to the afflicted man.

"Here! be quick; catch hold." And the smart young adjutant reined his horse close up to Colonel Baring's side.

He drew his sword, and, as the colonel clutched the coveted article, he sliced it in two, leaving by far the larger share in the hands of the grateful man.

"My good fellow, how shall I ever thank you?" he cried in between terrific trumpet-like blasts.

"Ask me in to breakfast this morning," returned George with unbounded assurance.

The colonel eyed him a moment, blew his nose again and nipped the last dislocating sneeze in its bud.

"You cheeky young dog! I know what you mean and what I let myself in for when I say yes. You may come, and you may think yourself lucky to have won her so easily."

He galloped off, and as he went he said to himself:

"He's a smart young fellow that. A man of resources must come to the fore sooner or later. Not another in the field—including myself and the general—would have thought of halving a pocket-handkerchief; and with his sword, too! Yes, yes, I shan't be far wrong, though it is not exactly what I wished for Aimée. Pity he belongs to that confounded old Staff Corps. Why couldn't he have stuck to the regiment?"

The review passed off well. The general was pleased to compliment Colonel Baring on his men, and he also had a few words of praise to bestow on the adjutant of the 50th.

Aimée rode on to the field in time to see the march-past. When the last volley had been fired and the business of the morning was finished, Captain Hamilton managed to get a few words with her.

They shook hands, and exchanged the usual new year greetings.

"Oh, you need not look at your father in that terrified fashion. He has given his consent, and I'm invited to breakfast."

She gave him a startled glance, and then turned away incredulous.

"Don't tease me, George. You know I can't bear it." And her lip actually trembled.

"My darling, I'm not teasing you. It is perfectly true. It was a bargain. Your father sold you to me this morning just before the general come."

"Sold me!"

She began to think that he had taken leave of his senses.

"Yes; sold you for a silk rag—for half a pocket-handkerchief. See, here is the other half," and he pulled the remnant out of his sleeve.

Her troubled face cleared a little, but showed no signs of enlightenment.

"I must go now," he exclaimed. "I'll tell you all about it if you will invite me into that snug little morning-room of yours after breakfast." And with a happy smile he trotted back to his post, for the men were preparing to march to their line.

When George wants to tease his wife now he tells her that she isn't worth much, for she was "Sold for a Silk Rag."

This is a one-act play requiring a woman of wit and resource, a young man in love, and a husband addicted to his club. In any casual group of people three such *dramatis personæ* should be found.

THE WAGER.

Dramatis Personæ.

MR. EDWARD CARRINGTON, husband and club man.
MRS. EDWARD CARRINGTON, wife and woman of wit.
LIEUT. BACHE LAWRENCE, U.S.N., young and in love with Mrs. Carrington, so far as he has taken his bearings.
MAID.

SCENE.

Boudoir in Mrs. Carrington's home in Washington. Vista in angle at left, looking toward drawing-room. The door at right leads to Mrs. Carrington's room. Door at back right leads to Mr. Carrington's room. Mantel at left. Window at right. All are in evening dress.

[Mrs. Carrington *enters, leaning on the arm of* Lieut. Lawrence, *from drawing-room.*

MRS. CARRINGTON.—So you leave to-morrow for New York?

LIEUT. LAWRENCE.—To-morrow morning at ten, or to-day I should say, for it is after midnight. [*Looks at the clock.*] In a few hours I shall be far away from Washington, and in a few days I shall have left this country for years.

MRS. C.—Years! Three at most. You sail on the flag-ship?

LIEUT. L.—Yes, we go to Samoa to watch the Dutch.

MRS. C.—You pull a long face, as if it wasn't the greatest lark in the world. Let me see, which darky

king is it that is your friend,—Malietoa, isn't that the gentleman's name?

LIEUT. L.—That is his name; but it is of no consequence.

MRS. C.—Only think, you are still a young man and three times, sir, you have lost sight of the capitol, and the procession of Congressmen, lobbyists, and office seekers on Pennsylvania Avenue. You have been to Asia, Africa, and the far-away isles of the sea, and brought me back fans and embroideries and delicious little idols. What happiness to get in a ship and sail away, and away, and away!

LIEUT. L.—You talk as if you had never been off the Washington asphalt.

MRS. C.—I went, only last summer, to see the midnight sun.

LIEUT. L.—And when you saw your native shores fade behind you, did not the wind murmur to your ears the sorrowful song of Marie Stuart?

MRS. C.—Pshaw! they say she never wrote it. But come, you are too melancholy. Let us go back to the drawing-room. A hostess owes something to her guests.

LIEUT. L.—What, so soon!

MRS. C.—Really you abuse the rights of a friend [*takes his hand to say good-bye*]. I saw you in the ball-room, moody, and rolling your eyes like a soul in torment, and I took pity on you and have given you a quarter of an hour's leave-taking. But it seems that is not sufficient. My young friend, Samoa is in this world. You will return.

LIEUT. L.—It is not the length of the voyage, but regret at what we leave, that makes the pain of parting.

MRS. C.—What a sentimental aphorism!

LIEUT. L.—You refuse to understand me.

MRS. C.—Have you said good-bye to my husband?

LIEUT. L.—Not yet.

MRS. C.—He will soon start for his club, as usual. Give me your arm to the drawing-room.

[*Exeunt talking in a low voice.*]

[*Enter* Maid *bringing tea service.*]

Maid.—Thank goodness, this evening is almost over! I hope this is the last time we will receive this winter. It bores Mr. Carrington, it tires out Mrs. Carrington, and it ennuis me. There, the tea is on the table. Everything is all right. I hope John Thomas has carried my supper upstairs, as I bid him.

[Maid *goes out at left.* Lieut. Lawrence *comes back alone.*]

Lieut. L.—It seems to me that when we separated her hand trembled, that her voice wavered. Bah! it is a delusion. It was my hand that trembled; it was my heart, not hers, that beat so tumultuously. She does not care for me. It is a dream. [*He falls into a chair.*] Was ever an adieu so cold? Not a word of consolation for a grief that shows in my looks, in my voice, even in my silence. When I am gone there will be balls and receptions at which her beauty will be supreme. But I must no longer think. I must leave this place. Strength fails me. Everything here breathes of her. Her perfume is in the air. Her feet have pressed this carpet. It seems to me that glass reflects her image. Miserable wretch, why can I not tear myself from this infatuation? [*Some one puts out the lights in the background.*] No; I cannot leave her so. She will come back here. I must speak to her once more. She shall know that in going away I carry her image in my heart. She will be angry. She will show me the door. Very well! I would rather endure her anger, than her indifference. I will risk everything to see her once more; to utter the words that burn on my lips. But here she comes.

[*He conceals himself behind a curtain.*]

[*Enter* Mrs. C., *goes to the mantel, and looks at the clock.*]

Mrs. C.—Put on some coal, and then go see if the lights are all out. Has Mr. Carrington gone out?

Maid.—Yes, Mrs. Carrington, a short time ago.

Mrs. C.—Very well, then fasten the doors.

Maid.—You want nothing more, Mrs. Carrington?

Mrs. C.—No; you can go. [*Exit* Maid. Mrs. C. *goes to the glass, takes out pins from her hair, and lets it fall. Stands*

by fire talking.] There, the world and I are quits for some time. What a bore it has been! [*Yawns.*] Almost two o'clock. Poor Bache was in a very bad way. He wanted me to look into the depths of his soul, but I wouldn't see. I was like ice to him, and he believes me utterly indifferent to his absence. But what *could* I say to him? Once gone it will be all right with him. At his age it is as easy to forget as to go to sleep. The further he goes away the better he will feel. But he cannot go so far that my good wishes will not follow him. [*A movement of the curtain makes her turn her head; she sees him.*] Ah, you here!

LIEUT. L.—[*troubled.*] Mrs. Carrington!

MRS. C.—Oh! come forward, I beg. I did not know that you had this talent for surprises.

LIEUT. L.—You are angry.

MRS. C.—I have some right to be, I fancy. I enter my room after the house is closed, and the servants are gone to bed. I am alone, and I find a man concealed behind the curtain. It is a situation I can scarcely speak of calmly. Very well, sir. Your plan has succeeded. You enter my room with the *sang froid* of a man who is accustomed to such expeditions. I congratulate you on experiences I had not suspected. At last you find me alone with you, as you wished. Now speak.

LIEUT. L.—You have no mercy, nor do I deserve any. The madness that prompted me is no excuse. I wished to see you once more. The love——

MRS. C.—I forbid you that word.

LIEUT. L.—I am silent. I can only ask pardon for my presumption. In the pain I suffer it is difficult for me to explain the motives that brought me here. It was not an adventure I had planned. Notwithstanding appearances are against me, I beg you to believe that, not for a moment, have you ceased to be the woman, of all others, I respect. You have a mind elevated enough to understand the foolish love of a heart of twenty, and a soul generous enough to forget it. I shall say nothing more, but go.

MRS. C.—So! that is easily enough said, but how? You do not yet know all the consequences of your folly. The doors are all fastened and everybody has gone to bed. Meanwhile, the mastiff is sleeping on the door-mat, and would not only chew you up, but waken the servants, and perhaps the neighbors. I am not willing to undergo their suspicions and conjectures. On the stage people go in and out of the windows; but, while you were behind that curtain, you probably observed the height. You ought to know that you cannot go that way unless you have had the forethought to bring with you a silk ladder. If you have brought a silk ladder in your pocket, this is the moment to produce it.

LIEUT. L.—You overwhelm me.

MRS. C.—I suppose, inspired by the romance of the situation, you desired to break your neck by leaping from the window. But what would I gain? All the neighbors would run to the windows to look at the man who leaped from my balcony. But that is not all. Mr. Carrington went out with my guests to spend an hour at the club. When he comes home he always comes in to take a cup of tea with me. What will you do then? In the morning he would probably offer you a choice of weapons. Now that would be nothing to you, but I would be compromised, sir. Plainly, you can't go away from here at this hour, and just as plainly you can't stay with safety to either yourself or myself. Probably you didn't think of all this when you were behind that curtain.

LIEUT. L.—I am in despair.

MRS. C.—Bring up a chair. [*Seats herself.*] We will finish the night by the fireside. Like soldiers at an outpost we will converse, but all the time on the alert. Have you been playing poker lately?

LIEUT. L.—I must appear very ridiculous to you.

MRS. C.—Frankly, at first you did. At present you are a little less so.

LIEUT. L.—What is the difference? The situation is not changed.

MRS. C.—It is the same. But the knowledge of the danger we run relieves you a little.

LIEUT. L.—Your courage amazes me.

MRS. C.—The world would call it effrontery. But, although appearances would be against me, my conscience gives me the right to be brave. Bravery is a sensation we women do not often have occasion to feel, and I would like to indulge it to the end. When I was a child my nurse used to feed me with stories of bugaboos. Now you might entertain me with terrible stories of revenge that husbands have taken on their wives. They tell me that sometimes they shoot them; others sew them up in sacks. You have heard the story of Count de Martigny. He was once here as attaché. I remember I danced with him at a Legation ball. Well, they say he made his wife eat the heart of her lover.

LIEUT. L.—Americans are not such barbarians.

MRS. C.—Their punishment is even more terrible.

LIEUT. L.—What is it?

MRS. C.—Dishonor.

LIEUT. L.—How you must hate me!

MRS. C.—I beg, don't keep up that tone. We are getting melodramatic.

LIEUT. L.—I deserve your persiflage. It makes me feel more keenly the extent of my fault, and the regret that I have proven unworthy the friendship you showed me.

MRS. C.—Don't let us speak of the past. I have no reproaches to make. You were too young for that abandon of friendship that existed between us, and with the natural facility of your years, you have glided over that slippery path which leads from friendship to love. That is what I should have foreseen.

LIEUT. L.—I feel that you are right, but it fills my soul with bitterness.

MRS. C.—You are young. Ambition will come to you; love will occupy only the second place in your life. Think of what your country expects from you—of the career that awaits you. You have a family that has a right to ask an account of how you have used your

opportunities. Think of your mother, of your sisters, and think more often of the woman of your dreams, and Heaven grant that you do not meet her too soon! Your heart is yet too impressionable—too easily fired for constancy. But when you do meet her—your eyes looking into hers, your hand in her hand—how, sir, are you going to carry off your sailor-like perfidies?

LIEUT. L. [*smiling.*]—I will sink them in my sea of happiness—perhaps.

[*Some one knocks loudly.*]

MRS. C.—My husband. This is the critical moment. You must hide. [*He goes toward curtains.*] No, not there; in my bed-room, there. Whatever happens I forgive you. [*She goes and opens door at back. Her husband enters.*]

MR. CARRINGTON.—I disturb you?

MRS. C.—Not at all.

MR. C.—I thought perhaps that crush had tired you out, and you had gone to bed. Once more, if I disturb you, I will go to my room.

[*He starts to door at back.*]

MRS. C.—No. Remain.

MR. C. Have you any tea, or a sandwich. I am as wide awake as an owl. I have just come from the club, and I have brought you a story worth hearing.

MRS. C.—What sort of story?

MR. C.—Scandalous, of course. To-morrow it will be all over town. But I have the first go. It is the story of a pair of slippers.

MRS. C.—Some naughtiness, and I don't know that I care to hear it.

MR. C.—You know the heroine, and as you are apt to meet her, I'd just as leave you'd know the story. These sandwiches are very good. I'm afraid the tea will keep me awake. Now I'll begin the story of the slippers of Mrs. Jimmie Goode.

MRS. C.—Mrs. Goode, that pretty little woman that was all the fashion last winter?

MR. C.—Did you know that Mrs. Goode was a perfect fury with the needle—a regular Penelope? Well,

it seems that, for some time, Mrs. Goode had been embroidering a pair of slippers. Now you know that no woman ever embroiders a pair of slippers for herself. They are for her preacher, or for her grandfather, or for somebody.

Mrs. C.—Yes.

Mr. C.—Or for the grandfather of her husband. That was what Jimmie Goode thought when he saw his wife embroidering those slippers; or rather, as she made a sort of pretence of hiding them, he thought they might be for himself. Whereupon he pretended not to see them; at the same time he did see them, and observed the progress she made from day to day. Isn't this a pretty good story now?

Mrs. C.—Continue.

Mr. C.—Well, there's an end to everything, even to needlework. One fine day the slippers appeared no more. Aha, thought Jimmie Goode, Christmas is coming. They have probably gone to my boot-maker's. I will get them in my stocking. But Christmas came, and no slippers. He was astonished. Then he thought again: I have a birthday in three weeks, she's saving them for my birthday present. Birthday came — no slippers. Goode was furious; for, d'ye see, he had promised them to himself. Now I come to think of it, he was wrong, for he hadn't sufficient grounds for that.

Mrs. C.—But what then?

Mr. C.—Well, he could hardly conceal his disappointment. He roamed about the house like a demon, asking himself what had become of that embroidery. And now, my dear, the thing becomes tragic. Yesterday evening Goode went into his wife's room at a pretty late hour, and there stood upon a stool near the window, and almost concealed by the curtains [*pointing to the curtain where Lieut. L. had been concealed*], he saw something red. Our man being short-sighted, he plunged toward them, glass in eye, and there were the slippers. Fancy it, Mrs. Goode had embroidered them for herself—for herself, my dear. But, in the midst of the affair, brother Goode discovered something else much

more astounding to a husband's eye than the slippers —the boots of a man concealed behind the curtain! You may judge if, after his disappointment about the slippers, Mr. Goode felt like laughing. "Sir," he said, "I see you." The man came out. Do you understand who it was?

MRS. C.—A thief.

MR. C.—A pretty little stripling, all spick and span, and very much embarrassed, I assure you. Judge of the scandal! At the club they pretend to say that Goode said to his wife, "I would have never got down to that footstool, and I would have never seen behind the curtain if you had given me those slippers instead of keeping them for yourself, in such a ridiculous manner. Now, they say there is to be a divorce, and that Mrs. Goode is a goner.

MRS. C.—Poor woman!

MR. C.—Really, I like to hear you sympathize with with her.

MRS. C.—And I admire to hear you tell such a story with so much gaiety and wit. A goner! It costs little, in truth, to utter such a cruel word.

MR. C.—Perhaps I am wrong, and had better blame her husband.

MRS. C.—I neither judge nor condemn any one. I only deplore Mrs. Goode. It seems it is only sufficient to find a man behind a woman's curtain to pronounce her a lost woman. Appearances against her must be accepted without appeal. You ask nothing further, O infallible judge!

MR. C.—Now look here, Agnes, I know that you find innocent and persecuted wives in novels, but I would just like to know what you would have thought if you had been her husband?

MRS. C.—If I was a man, and my wife had always been true to me, I would have accepted her word as the least deceitful of all proofs.

MR. C.—That is a very fine paradox, and you are taking advantage of my weakness for you.

MRS. C.—It is a weakness, then. I see very clearly

that your faith in me would not stand the proof. My dear, you are too fond of comic operas. The plots stick in your head.

MR. C.—Now, Agnes, the comic operas sometimes give the wives a chance.

MRS. C.—Do they? [*Mockingly.*] Very well. You have told me the story of Mrs. Goode's slippers, and I will answer you with a supposition. Suppose a young man is in love with a woman who has given him no encouragement. One fine evening this young man loses his head, and hides behind the curtain of this woman's room. What shall she do?

MR. C.—Fancy asking such a question. Show the fellow the door after giving him a piece of your mind. [*Very angrily.*] "What does such conduct mean, sir? For what do you take me? I'm not a woman to permit such liberties. Get out, or I will call my husband." Talk to him that way, Agnes, and I'll wager he wouldn't do it again.

MRS. C.—Very well, but suppose while one is making this pretty little speech, one's husband comes upon the scene, would he accept this explanation, which in truth seems a little forced.

MR. C.—Well, the truth is, he would be a little embarrassed—if he is quick-witted and—

MRS. C.—And is fond of comic operas.

MR. C.—Comic operas seem to run in your head. Well, I'll vow it has something of the look of a scene in a comic opera, in which the husband has not the best part. Tricks of this sort are in the air. At any rate, I do not accept your supposition. There is only one sort of thief who will enter a house without being called. A lover does not risk such an expedition without a reason.

MRS. C.—You are begging the question. It is possible my supposition is not reasonable. Here is a woman in a most perilous position. She has a lover concealed who has fallen, as it were, from the clouds. Her innocence will not serve her because appearances are against her. How shall she save herself? All

her wits are alive to conceive of some ruse to deceive her husband just as if the man was a real lover. Her husband does not believe her lest he seem ridiculous. He forces his wife to deceive him to save her honor. Who knows then but that to-morrow, emboldened by her success, she will deceive him again and with cause? What strange, stupid tyrants men are! You repulse confidence, you treat a woman as a slave, and she defends herself with the arms of a slave—lies and deceit.

MR. C.—Look here, Agnes, you are getting hysterical. The story of Mrs. Goode's adventure has upset you. I guess I'll go.

MRS. C.—[*Aside.*] If he goes I will be alone with Bache; if he stays, no danger. [*Aloud.*] Is it very late?

Mr. C.—No. But it is true that the story of Mrs. Goode's slippers has put you in a state of mind.

MRS. C.—Bah! don't let's talk any more of that unhappy woman. Take another cup of tea. Your story is amusing enough. But I don't like your club. It is a hot-bed of scandal.

MR. C.—Not at all. At least we don't talk when we play.

MRS. C.—What is it, poker?

MR. C.—Baccarat more often.

MRS. C.—Do you play much?

MR. C.—Not much; but funny—I always win.

MRS. C.—Play is a horrible thing. But to return to the club. It is only a pretext. A man says "I'm going to the club," and there's nothing to say. In the comic operas don't the men fool their wives with the club, or do they have clubs in the plots?

MR. C.—Great Scott! I wish I *could* make you jealous.

MRS. C.—Happily I have not a jealous disposition. I think it was last week that I went into your room at four o'clock for a book, and you hadn't come in. What a life you lead!

MR. C.—I remember? That was the night I held the stakes in the bet between Jack Wilson and Sir George Hay—didn't I tell you about that?

Mrs. C.—It seems to me in the morning you said about two words. [*Aside.*] So you are willing to be deceived.

Mr. C.—It was a trifle. Wilson bet Sir George that he could go from the club to Dupont Circle—fancy how!

Mrs. C.—On one foot,—backward,—on his head?

Mr. C.—Not a bit. Blindfolded, with a cane.

Mrs. C.—And why at night?

Mr. C.—Not to be run down.

Mrs. C.—What folly!

Mr. C.—We have to pass the time some way. Besides, exercise is beneficial after a late supper.

Mrs. C.—Well, who won?

Mr. C.—Wilson, by Jove! He's a charming fellow. I'll ask him here some time.

Mrs. C.—I've no fancy for somnambulists.

Mr. C.—One doesn't have to be a somnambulist. It's the easiest thing in the world. I watched Wilson's method. You see, first you bandage your eyes. Then you take a cane and start. But you must be sure to notice which foot you put first. Then you walk slowly, striking with your cane.

Mrs. C.—That's all very well. But I must beg of you, Ned, not to stay so late at the club. Now if you hadn't gone there you wouldn't have heard this story, which almost made us quarrel.

Mr. C.—Quarrel? oh no! It's never a question of quarrelling with you. You never deign to honor me with any feeling so intense.

Mrs. C.—What good would it do me? It is now three o'clock, and you have just come in. I never know when you come or when you go [*pointing to door at right*]. Where you are as free as a bachelor [*lifting her voice a little*]. From your room is a little staircase leading to a door on the street. In your pocket is the key of the door. What could be better? The day that I become jealous I will have that door nailed up.

Mr. C.—Do you want the key? [*Hands it to her.*]

Mrs. C.—You'd have another made.

MR. C.—Is that all the confidence you have in me?

MRS. C.—Do you have more in women?

MR. C.—I'll give you my word of honor with the key.

MRS. C.—Would Jimmie Goode, after his wife's adventure, believe her word?

MR. C.—How bitter you are! [*Places the key on the mantel.*] Now listen, I'll never come in except by the hall door [*moment of silence*].

MRS. C.—And you won't go so often to the club?

MR. C.—I won't go at all, s'help me!

MRS. C.—Except when there's some bet more foolish than the one the other night. Did you bet on Mr. Wilson?

MR. C.—I won twenty dollars.

MRS. C.—You ought to have lost it.

MR. C.—But I tell you there's nothing easier in the world. One would suppose it was the great Sahara, and that Wilson was going to take his life in his hand.

MRS. C.—Well, I'll have to see it done first.

MR. C.—You are awfully skeptical. I tell you I watched Wilson's method. You take your cane, noticing, as I have said, on which foot you step out. That is very important, Wilson said so. Then—

MRS. C.—Ah, let me see you try it, only from here to my dressing-room at the other end of my bedroom.

MR. C.—Very well. What'll you bet?

MRS. C.—What will you have? A secret? On my dressing-table there is a square cut-glass bottle. Bring it to me with your eyes bandaged.

MR. C.—What's the use of that, it's dark.

MRS. C.—Ah, but the light through the window, the moonlight. You counted on it.

MR. C.—'Pon honor. Agreed. Blindfold me.

MRS. C.—I'm delighted to see you so determined. What children we are! If anybody should see us.

MR. C.—Who cares. The President plays elephant with Baby McKee.

MRS. C.—I warn you the bet is serious.

MR. C.—[*She blindfolds him.*] Your rags always smell so nice.

MRS. C.—Are you sure you can't see through?

MR. C.—I'm blind as a bat.

MRS. C.—And you won't raise it?

MR. C.—Come with me and see.

MRS. C.—No; I'll prove to you that I have faith in your word.

MR. C.—You didn't talk that way a little while ago about the key.

MRS. C.—[*Aside.*] Does he suspect me? Is he deceiving me? He has fallen too easily into the snare.

MR. C.—Eh, what!

MRS. C.—Here is your stick. We shall see now how much you learned from Jack Wilson. Wait now until I open the door. [*Aside.*] Oh, God protect me! [*Opens door.*] There, go.

[*He enters the room slowly and disappears.*

Lieut. L. *comes out of the same room softly.*

MRS. C.—You have heard what we said. [*She lights a little porcelain candlestick on the mantel and gives it to* Lieut. L. *as she opens the door into her husband's room.*] Cross the room, open the door, and you will find the little staircase. Here is the key of the street door.

LIEUT. L.—Mrs. Carrington. How can I ever—

MRS. C.—The door open, shut it, lock it, and throw the key over the first wall you find. As for the candlestick [*laughing*], keep it for a souvenir of this night.

LIEUT. L.—Will you pardon me?

MRS. C.—I forget everything. Go and be happy.

LIEUT.—Adieu. [*Kisses her hand and goes.*]

MRS. C.—[*Alone and coming forward.*] Saved. Both of us.

MR. C.—[*Comes in, taking off the bandage.*] Bless me, but it's good to see my way again.

MRS. C.—[*Aside.*] That is very apropos. [*Aloud.*] But the bottle.

MR. C.—The deuce fly away with it. I turned over everything on your dressing-table, and I swear the bottle isn't there. That's what kept me so long.

MRS. C.—Did you break anything?

MR. C.—Don't ask me— But there's the fly-away bottle!

MRS. C.—How stupid of me. There it is on the table. I had totally forgotten it when I sent you to hunt it.

MR. C.—All the same, I want you to know I've won my bet.

MRS. C.—So be it. Although I have no proof that you went to my dressing-room.

MR. C.—You will when you see that table. But what are you going to give me?

MRS. C.—We'll talk about that when you have nailed up that door.

MR. C.—I'll do it to-morrow.

MRS. C.—Then you will be worthy my confidence, and you will know why you went to get a bottle that was not there.

MR. C.—What, do you mean to say—

MRS. C.—I mean to say that it is five o'clock. So, to your room. Now remember your promise. And, believe me, it will not be my fault if you do not learn the secret of this night.

CURTAIN.

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A chapter out of the last days of the Confederacy, written with spirit and humor, by Milton T. Adkins, for the *Yankee Blade.*

A BAG OF COFFEE.

"Talk about feeling blue," said the colonel, one day, when the blue pencil brigade rested at noon from their labors of editing postmasters' "accounts current," "about the bluest time I ever saw, and most of you are aware I aint no spring chicken, was when I surrendered with Johnston in No'th Ca'lina, and started for home."

"Tell us about it, colonel!" said the boys.

"Well, you see it was this way. Durin' the wa'h I'd left the old woman on the plantation down in South Ca'lina, but when the surrender come I hadn't heard a word from home for more than six months, an' I didn't have the least idea whether there was a soul left alive on the place, nor whether Sherman's army had left anything of the old place more than just the naked dirt.

"Well, I started off for home, or towards where I thought home ought'r be, with my parole in my pocket, and riding the poorest, orneriest mule it was ever my misfortune to become acquainted with; and I do assure you, gentlemen, I have had a large, variegated, and picturesque experience in that particular line.

"We moseyed along, the mule and I and one or two of the other boys, until we got down to Charlotte, and there the officer in command pressed me into service to help him parole a big lot of the prisoners.

"It took us a couple of weeks to get through the job, and when I was getting ready to start, the colonel in command said:

"'I can't pay you anything for your services, but I think if you were to take that beast down to the corral and swap him off for a better one, it would be a good thing for you; and I guess the Government will be able to stand it.'

"Well, you fellows here, who know my liberal disposition, will probably imagine I wan't slow to take a hint like that—I turned in my crow-bait, and took the best in the lot, and I flatter myself I know a good mule when I see one.

"'Puty good animal you got there," said the officer, when I rode up to his quarters, "ther's some coffee down in the commissary, and that mule looks strong enough to carry a bag of it.'"

"Well, sir, half an hour later I left town on the best mule I ever straddled, carrying a bag of coffee worth one hundred and sixty dollars in gold, and altogether feeling like the richest man in the late Confederacy.

"I travelled by myself on the first day out—just me and the mule and the bag of coffee.

"I got along all right until along towards dark when I began to look out for a place to put up for the night. It was the dismalest prospect you ever saw—the poorest pine barrens—it made you hungry to just ride along and look at the country; and the houses were mighty wide apart.

"At last I saw a light, and rode up to a cabin by the side of the road, and found an old woman sitting in the door smoking a pipe. I boned her to let me stay all night. She fetched her old pipe a few more whiffs, and finally said:

"'You'll hatter gwy on to the next house, stranger.'

"'How far is it?"

"Puff, puff, 'Bout four or five miles—mebbe six.'

"But, my good woman, I am tired and my mule is tired—let me stay, if I have to sleep on the floor.'

"Puff, puff. 'Hain't got no grub.'

"'I do not care for myself, if you can only give my mule something.'

"Puff, puff. 'Hain't got nothing for the critter.'

"'Well, we will both do without if we can only stay—I do not want to lie down by the road and maybe wake up murdered by some guerrilla.'

"She finally consented to this—moved out of the door and took up her station by the fireplace, where

she continued her labors with the pipe, as if that were the chief end and aim of existence.

"I took off the saddle, tied the mule to the door-jamb, spread my blanket just inside the door, and lay down, with my precious bag of coffee for a pillow.

"There didn't seem to be another soul on the place, but I asked no questions for conscience's sake. I just laid there a-wishing for a bite to eat, and a-watching that old woman hunkered over the fireplace smoking like a tar-kiln.

"Well, I kept on a-laying there trying to forget how mortal hungry I was and mebbe catch forty winks of sleep, but the mule outside was as hungry as I was, and every now and then he'd fetch a low kind of a whickerin' he-haw, and then he'd let in to knaw on the door-jamb.

"I got tired of his capers after a while, and finally said:

"'I know you are hungry, old man, and if I thought you'd eat it I'd give you some of this coffee.'

"Well, sir, I happened to have my eyes turned toward the fireplace when I said this, and I'm a sinner if I didn't actually see that old woman prick up her ears like she'd heard something drop.

"She straightened up, looked at me a moment, and said:

"'Did you'ns say c-o-f-f-e-e?'

"'I did, madam.'

"'G-i-n-n-y-w-i-n-e c-o-f-f-e-e?'

"'Genuine coffee, madam.'

"'A-gwyin' to give hit to a m-e-w-e-l?'

"'The mule is tired and hungry, madam, and so am I.'

"'Stranger, I hain't seed no g-i-n-n-y-w-i-n-e coffee for nigh onto three years, an' hit would seem sorter onr'lig'us, somehow, to feed hit to a mewel.'

"I supposed she'd actually told me the truth about having nothing to eat, but I said at a venture:

"'Madam, I've got one hundred and sixty pounds of coffee right here under my head, and if you'll get

something for me and my mule to eat you shall have some of it.'

"Well, sir, it acted like magic. She went to the bed in the corner, turned back the cover, turned down the mattress, and I'll agree to never put good victuals in my chops again if she didn't have a regular commissary in there. All the under part of the bed was planked up solid, and was just filled with ham and side bacon and meal and corn. She even fetched out a little poke filled with flour. In five minutes my mule had a good feed of corn, and in half an hour I sat down to the best dish of fried ham that ever went down my throat.

"While she was cooking supper, I poured her out about a quart and a half of the green coffee, and you ought'r seen that poor old soul. She was just tickled to death. She whirled in and parched a skillet full of it, pounded it up in a rag on the hearth, and when I went off to sleep with a full stomach, she was a-sitting there hunkered up over the fireplace, with an old rusty pot steaming full, and drinking like she'd never get enough. You better believe the pipe was laid on the shelf, and about every fifteen minutes she'd say to herself:

"'Hit's the fust ginnywine coffee I've seed for three years.'

"Well, sir, I won't undertake to say that she sat there all night and poured hot coffee down her throat, because I slept like a top and don't know what she did do—but I'll agree to never tell the truth again if she wasn't sitting there the next morning hunkered up over the ashes and a-drinking away, and the first thing I heard was:

"'Ginnywine c-o-f-f-e-e.'

"She stopped drinking long enough to cook me some breakfast; and then I gave her another quart of the green berries and rode away. The last I saw of her, she was making a fresh potful; and the last words I heard were:

"'Good-by, stranger. Thank the Lord fur ye comin'. Hit's the fust ginnwyine coffee I've seed in three years.'"

Those puzzling distinctions on which classes of society are based, selling sugar by the pound and by the hogshead, for example, were under discussion at the Club the other evening, when somebody recalled "Elegant Tom Dillar," a story written by Charles F. Briggs and published in *Putnam's Magazine.* It is reprinted in ROMANCE by kind permission, and both for entertainment and comment will prove interesting.

ELEGANT TOM DILLAR.

I.

To speak of Tom Dillar in any other way than by his pseudonym of Elegant would be like speaking of Harold Harefoot, Edwin the Fair, the Black Prince, or Louis the Debonnaire, without their distinguishing adjectives. Tom Dillar was known to his acquaintances only as Elegant Tom, and he was well entitled to the epithet, for he was elegant in looks, manners, and style. He was one of those happy persons who seem to have come into the world for the sole purpose of eating the sunny side of ripe peaches. There were no deficiencies in Elegant Tom Dillar, and if one could have the ordering of his own antecedents, they could not be superior to Tom's. On the side of his father, he was connected with the best English families in the state; and, by the mother's side, he could boast of the purest Dutch descent. He inherited a large fortune from his father, and, what was much better, a healthy constitution and a handsome person. Being independent in his circumstances, he was not educated for a profession; but, being apt to learn, he was taught a good many accomplishments that are not generally bestowed upon American youths. He could dance much better than most professors of that elegant art, and in music he was something more than a proficient upon the guitar, the piano, and the violin. Then he had a fine voice, a delicious tenor, and those who had the good fortune to hear him sing used to boast of it, as though a piece

of rare luck had befallen them. Tom was good-natured too, and as amiable as though it were necessary for him to conciliate the world, that his presence might not be considered an intrusion. But, of all men, he was least likely to be considered *de trop* in the world.

He went abroad, and came back as amiable and unpretending as he went, but with more accomplishments than he carried away. He was invited everywhere, and he might have married any girl he chose to honor in that manner; but, as often happens in such cases, he seemed never to have been touched in his heart by any of the beautiful creatures who surrounded him. There was Fanny Ormolu, the only daughter of the great auctioneer, who, they used to say, was dying for him; and it was said that her father was so fearful of the effects of Tom's indifference on his daughter's health, that he was guilty of the indelicacy of offering to settle a hundred thousand dollars on him if he would marry her. But Tom had never known what it was to want money, and, like an honorable, high-minded fellow as he was, refused to sell himself, even at so high a figure, and to so beautiful a purchaser.

They say that old Ormolu was so exasperated and indignant at Tom's refusal, that he swore he would have satisfaction for the insult; and he was as good as his word. He did not challenge Tom, nor, indeed, permit him to know that he entertained any ill-will against him; for, if he had, he probably would not have been able to accomplish his purpose. Ormolu was a commercial gentleman, and his manner of getting satisfaction was a purely business transaction; in fact, the old fellow did not understand any thing else. He set himself deliberately to work to ruin Tom by getting away all his money. As this would have been the severest punishment that could have been inflicted upon himself, he naturally and very sensibly imagined that he could inflict no greater wrong upon another than by making him bankrupt.

Now, Tom was not a spendthrift, nor a gambler; but then he was the merest child in business matters, and

had no idea about money transactions beyond drawing his dividends every six months, and contriving to make his income just meet his expenditure. Tom had often wished that his income was larger, for he had long been ambitious of owning a yacht, but was unable to indulge in that costly enjoyment; so, when his young friend, Pete Van Slicer, of the firm of Van Slicer, Son & Co., the great stockbrokers, of Wall Street, one day said to him, as if by accident, "Tom, how would you like to enter into a little speculation, by which you might make a hundred thousand dollars or so?" Tom opened his eyes, and eagerly replied he would like nothing better.

Pete then carelessly remarked, that Bob So-and-so had made nearly double that sum a few days before, by a corner in Harlem, and that he could put Tom in the way of making at least that amount by a speculation in Pottawattamy Coal Stock. Tom, not being familiar with stock operations, asked how it could be done; whereupon Pete explained to him that certain parties having sold long in the stock were going to get up a corner, which would compel the shorts to buy in, and that the stock would then begin to rise, and there was no knowing where it would stop. What Pete proposed that Tom should do was, to buy in while it was down, and when the rise should reach its height to sell out, and pocket the profits.

"Can I rely on the rise taking place?" asked Tom, who had not a very clear notion of the nature of the transaction.

"Trust to me," replied Pete, with a knowing wink, which seemed to Tom so full of sagacity, that he concluded to trust to him, and accordingly gave an order to the firm of Van Slicer, Son & Co., to purchase, for his account, about ten times as many shares of the Pottawattamy Coal Stock as he had the means to pay for, Pete undertaking to carry the stock, as he called it, for thirty days, in which time the rise was sure to occur.

Having made this little business arrangement with his Wall Street friend, Tom jumped into one of the Dry

Dock stages, to go up to the ship-yards and make inquiries about the cost of a yacht; and that night he dreamed of winning the Queen's cup at the Cowes regatta, and of lying at anchor in the harbor of Newport, and other pleasant things connected with the manly sport of yachting.

Tom did not know that his friend, Pete Van Slicer, was paying attention to Fanny Ormolu; and, even if he had, he could never have imagined that old Ormolu was making use of the young stockbroker to ruin his friend. But such was the fact.

The next day Elegant Tom Dillar created a good deal of surprise among the motley throng of Jews and "lame ducks" that hover round the doors of the Stock Board in the third story of the Merc ants' Exchange; and when a playful Hebrew knocked Tom's hat over his eyes, as he stood anxiously waiting to hear what Pottawattamy sold at, he was so engrossed in his new speculation that he never though of resenting the affront. Pottawattamy went up one per cent. that day, but the next it went down ten, and the next ten more, and Tom received a brief note from Van Slicer, Son & Co. informing him that he was their debtor for losses on Pottawattamy Coal Stock, in a sum that considerably exceeded his entire fortune.

A man who has never felt the actual cautery of poverty cannot have a very clear idea of what that word really means, and Tom did not, therefore, feel half so badly as he ought to have done, when he had to confess to himself that he was a bankrupt.

There is nothing to be gained by going into the distressing particulars of Tom's settlement with his brokers, and therefore I will merely remark that on the very day upon which all his available property passed out of his own hands into those of Van Slicer, Son & Co., the junior member of that eminent firm was united in the holy bonds of matrimony, as the papers say, to Fanny Ormolu, only daughter and so forth, of Jefferson Ormolu, Esq., our enterprising and esteemed fellow-citizen, of the eminent firm of Ormolu, Bronze & Co.

II.

The ruin of Thomas Dillar, Esq., was complete. Wall street never witnessed a more decided cleaning out than in the case of my elegant friend. It was so smoothly and rapidly done, that he was like the man who didn't know he was decapitated until he attempted to nod his head—so sharply, so adroitly, and so quickly had the blow been dealt. But it does not take long for a person to find out that he is poor, and Elegant Tom Dillar immediately began to have a "realizing sense" of the true state of his case. He had nothing in the world left but his watch, and a few articles of jewelry, by which he could raise money enough to discharge the few debts he owed, and which were demanded with a rude pertinacity that he had never known before. He had to abandon the hotel in Broadway at which he had been living, and take cheap lodgings in Beekman Street; and, instead of having more invitations to dine than he could accept, he suddenly found himself without any invitation at all; as to evening parties, although he had made up his mind not to go to any more, he had the mortification of being cut by all his old friends, and soon ceased to expect any attentions from them. Heretofore Tom had skimmed the cream of human existence; he had visited only the best circles, eaten the best dinners, drank the best wines, read the most amusing books, worn the best clothes, and had known nothing of the infelicities of human existence, except by hearsay. But now his turn had come to feed on husks, and taste of hyssop.

What Tom had suffered, or how he had struggled, none knew but himself, for he was too proud to complain, and, to all appearances, he was light-hearted and cheerful as ever he had been in his most prosperous days. But, as the writer of these lines was one evening hurrying down Broadway, to escape from the clouds of blinding dust which a cold northwest wind was driving along that crowded avenue, he was suddenly arrested, near the corner of Canal Street, by a tap on the

shoulder. Turning round, he saw Elegant Tom Dillar, with his coat buttoned closely up to his throat, and looking uncomfortably sharp, serious, and, to make use of a vulgar figure of speech, seedy.

"How are you?" said Tom, in his usual elegant manner; but without waiting for a reply, he continued, "you needn't ask me how I am, for I can discern by your looks that you see how I am. I am hungry."

Elegant Tom Dillar hungry!

I was too much shocked by this humiliating confession from a man whom I had known and envied in his happier days to disguise my feelings. But I put my hand in my pocket to feel for my purse.

"Thank you," said Tom, "it is very generous in you to anticipate my request. It is but a trifle that I need; and I will repay you soon."

I offered him the contents of my purse; but he would not take more than half a dollar. "At least," said I, "allow me to treat you to a supper, since you say you are hungry?"

"I will agree to that," he replied, "upon the condition that you favor me with your company, and allow me to call for what I want."

Of course, I could not refuse his proposition, and, knowing what his former habits had been, I supposed he would go into some of the splendid restaurants on Broadway, and call for such a supper as he had once been accustomed to indulge in. But, on the contrary, he led me into one of the cross streets, and I followed him down into a very humble underground "Saloon," where he ordered a supper of cold meat and bread, and I could not prevail upon him to indulge in anything more.

"You know something of my history," said Tom, "how I once lived, and how I lost my property; but how I have lived since, you do not know, and I shall not distress you by telling. Look," said he, and he unbuttoned his threadbare coat, when I saw that he had on neither vest nor shirt. "I am actually reduced to this extreme," said he, and his voice quivered as he

spoke, "by trying to live honestly. Up to this very hour, until I met you, I have not stooped to beg; but now I was driven to it. I had nothing left by which I could raise a shilling, and I had not tasted food to-day."

"Good heavens!" said I, "can this be true? What, Elegant Tom Dillar, with all his accomplishments, his rich acquaintances, his knowledge of the world, and in a city like this, where employment is so readily obtained, reduced to starvation! It cannot be true."

"But it is true," said Tom, "impossible as it may seem to you, and all because I was not brought up to a regular profession. My accomplishments were not of a kind to bring me money in an honorable way, and I made up my mind that if I could not live honorably, I would prefer not to live at all. I could easily have sold myself to unworthy or disreputable employments, or my former friends would probably have been glad to have had me sing for them, and have rewarded me by permitting me to live on their bounty, but I could not submit to such a position as that. I could never be a jack-pudding of society; and I would not disgrace my father's name by a dishonorable occupation."

As Tom spoke these words, he looked more elegant in his shabby suit than ever he had done in his happier days; and, in spite of his poverty, I could not but still admire his manly spirit and self-reliance. I actually felt poor beside him.

"But," said I, "why will you not allow me to lend you a larger sum than you have taken? You shall be heartily welcome to more."

"Because," replied Tom, "it is all I need. I think I have found a place, and after this, I shall be rich again."

I wished his expectations might be realized, and, shaking his hand, I gave him my card, and begged he would send to me, if he should need any further assistance.

III.

It was about three months after I parted from Tom in the cheap restaurant, that, as I entered the vestibule

of the Astor House, I met him coming out of that hotel. I started back with amazement as I saw him, for Tom was now dressed with greater splendor than I had ever before seen him; not obtrusively made up, but with an air of studied elegance that was new to him. Certainly he never looked better, nor better deserved to be called Elegant Tom Dillar. He appeared a little embarrassed when he first caught my eye, but his old manner soon returned. "I owe you a trifle, I think," said he; "let me pay it." And he pulled out a silk purse which seemed to be full of gold and silver, and reached me a half-dollar.

"That is the principal," said he; "now do me the favor to accept this for interest;" and he took a handsome seal ring from his finger, which he put upon mine. As our initials were the same, I do not know whether he had had it cut for me or not; but, seeing my cipher on the agate, I fancied he had, and did not refuse it. I keep it among my most precious mementoes of past friendship, for Tom Dillar is one of those persons whose acquaintance I regard as a feather in my cap.

IV.

The reappearance of Elegant Tom Dillar in what is called society, was a topic of universal conversation in fashionable circles, and once more invitations began to pour in upon him, so that he might, if he had had the capacity, have eaten three dinners daily at the very best houses in town, and have danced in the most brilliant company that New York could afford, nearly every night. But a great change was perceptible in Tom's manner. He was the same Elegant Tom Dillar he had ever been; faultless in his manner, refined in his conversation, incredible in dress, and handsomer, if possible, than before his retirement. "But he is so subdued in his style," was the remark of everybody. He never danced, and when he was pressed to sing, he always evaded the request by pleading a slight hoarseness. There used to be a slight dash of frivolity in

Tom's conversation and conduct, and he would abandon himself to all kinds of merriment; but now he was rather grave, quiet, and dignified, and several ambitious young men made most melancholy attempts to form themselves upon his style. Another of his changes was, that he wore his hair cut very short, and his fine classical head was improved by it. In fact, Tom's new style was infinitely more interesting, becoming, and *distingué* than his old. Certain pious ladies got their heads together, and, after discussing the matter, came to the conclusion that Tom Dillar was preparing himself for the ministry. This suspicion even gave a new interest to him, and he became more than ever an object of observation. But this theory was soon exploded; for, if Tom were engaged in so pious an occupation, under whose auspices was he studying? On hearing the report, Tom smiled sarcastically, and raised his eyebrows as people do when they are both surprised and amused, but did not deny it. But, if he was not studying for the ministry, what was he doing, and how did he live? Where did he get his money? for it was known that Tom paid as he went, and not a soul of his acquaintance could accuse him of borrowing.

These questions began to grow extremely interesting and puzzling, for the manner in which Tom had been cleaned out by his speculation in Pottawattamy Coal Stock, by his friend, Pete Van Slicer, was as notorious as his subsequent poverty and retirement from the world. All sorts of expedients were resorted to for the purpose of discovering the secret of Tom's income; but the mystery baffled the keenest investigation, and the consequence was, that the wildest conceivable stories were told about him, and he was regarded with looks of suspicion, and treated with cold disdain by certain ladies who had marriageable daughters. The excitement at last reached its calenture when it discovered that Julia Laurens, daughter of the celebrated and wealthy physician of that name, and granddaughter of old Ormolu the auctioneer, one of the most beautiful and fascinating girls in society, had actually fallen in

love with Tom, and that he had been forbidden her father's because he refused to tell how he gained his income.

The report of this interesting circumstance invested the mystery of Tom's prosperity with a romantic interest, and the excitement became absolutely furious. It was impossible to enter a house without hearing the subject discussed, and even merchants talked about it on 'Change. The different theories which were broached were highly instructive, inasmuch as they revealed the many different methods by which a man may contrive to live without labor; but it so happened, that not one of them came within a thousand miles of the truth. Tom had, in fact, discovered a placer, as he termed it, which he alone knew how to work; and most discreetly did he keep his secret until, in a luckless moment, the merest accident revealed it.

The women, poor simple-minded creatures, knowing but little of the world, had their own innocent surmises about Tom, the most plausible of which was, that he had entered into a league with the——; some other ladies, who had a less practical acquaintance with human possibilities, believed that he got his money by writing poems for the magazines; while others said that he gambled. But Tom's regular habits and his placidity of temper were adverse to the last supposition. The men, of course, gave shrewder guesses; and one party maintained, with some plausibility, that Tom Dillar was employed as a Russian spy. The difficulty in this case was that he never received any foreign letters, was notoriously ignorant of political movements, and never mingled in any society where he would be likely to pick up any infomation that would interest the Emperor of Russia. Another party maintained that he speculated in stocks; but that theory was easily knocked in the head. Tom had not been in Wall street since his speculation in the Pottawattamy Coal Stock. Some ill-natured people hinted that he was employed in circulating counterfeit money; but he was closely watched, and was never known to pass off

a bad bill. He was accused of picking pockets, of buying lottery tickets, and other disreputable practices; but the strict integrity of Tom's conduct, and his perfect frankness on all subjects concerning himself, except that impenetrable mystery of the source of his income, put every ungenerous suspicion to rest. He was watched when he went from a party, or the opera, and was always found to go directly to his lodgings, and there, too, would he be found in the morning. Julia Laurens's father had employed a police officer to dodge Tom's footsteps, and discover what his haunts were; but the man could learn nothing more than was already known. There was one rather striking peculiarity, however, about Tom's movements, which might lead to the discovery of the mystery. Nobody had seen him, except on Sunday nights, between the hours of seven and ten. Every place of amusement in the city was ransacked in vain, during these hours, but no sign of Tom Dillar could anywhere be found, and he continued to be a subject of talk in society, where he was still well received in spite of all the evil things that were surmised about him.

Julia Laurens was a spirited girl, and she loved Tom the better, perhaps, because he was the object of so much unjust suspicion; and her father, the doctor, was charmed by Tom's intelligence, his gentlemanly manners, his fine taste, and his amiability; and most happy would he have been to acknowledge him as his son-in-law, but for the mysterious silence which he observed in respect to his income. But, as Tom was resolute in his silence, the father of Julia was inexorable, and there was nothing left for them but a clandestine marriage. The lady hinted at her willingness, but Tom told her, dearly as he loved her, he would not be guilty of a dishonorable act to obtain her. He would wait a little longer, and perhaps her father would relent.

To fully appreciate Tom's noble conduct, it should be known that Julia, in addition to her expectations from her father's property, which was already large, and rapidly increasing, had property of her own, valued

at fifty thousand dollars, which had been bequeathed her by an aunt. All this Tom might have had, and the woman he loved besides, but for his high-minded sense of honor.

V.

Doctor Laurens, Julia's father, was a most passionate lover of music, and you were always sure of seeing him in his box at the opera, in his bright-buttoned coat, with lorgnette in hand, listening to the prima donna as though she were a patient, and he anticipated a fee at the close of the performance. He was so catholic in his tastes that he could enjoy one kind of music as well as another, and, when there was no opera, and his patients would permit it, he would go to hear the minstrels, and sit through the entire performance. In fact, the banjo was one of the Doctor's weaknesses, and there were some people who were uncharitable enough to say that negro minstrelsy was much better adapted to his musical taste than the Italian opera. But that was mere scandal, of course, for the Doctor had been in Europe, and had brought back with him, like many other gentlemen who go abroad, a taste for music and the fine arts, which he did not carry with him.

There was one member of the Ethiopian band where the Doctor was in the habit of going, who had completely fascinated him, which was not much to be wondered at, for he had fascinated everybody else who heard him; and when he appeared, there was sure to be an overflowing house. The name of this incomparable singer was Higgins, and his talents, as a banjo player, as a dancer, and a personator of the negro character, particularly as the negro dandy, were equal to his splendid abilities as a singer. The Doctor never failed to drop into the Ethiopian opera, as it was called, whenever this public favorite appeared, which was nearly every night, and seeing his name up on the bills for a benefit, the Doctor resolved to go.

On reaching the hall he found the house so crowded, that he could not even get his nose inside, but the door-

keeper recognized him, and wishing to gratify so distinguished a patron of the establishment, offered to show him round by a private entrance, so that he would be near the stage, and might retire at his leisure.

The Doctor was delighted, and put something handsome into the hand of the door-keeper, as an acknowledgement for the favor. He got a comfortable seat near the stage, and waited with impatience for the appearance of the incomparable Higgins. The sham darkey was in splendid voice, and filled the audience with ecstatic pleasure by his happy imitations of Dandy Jim. But his most brilliant performance was in the plantation break-down, in which he ravished the spectator by his unparalleled heeling and toeing. In the midst of the performance, when the frenzy of the spectators was at its height, a boy in the gallery threw a piece of orange-peel on the stage, and Higgins, by an unlucky step put his foot upon it, and fell with a tremendous crash. The audience at first thought it a part of the dance, and applauded tremendously, but it was soon discovered that the poor man had met with a serious accident. He was taken up by his companions and borne off the stage; directly after, the leader of the band came on, and asked if there was a surgeon in the house, as Mr. Higgins was badly hurt by his fall. Doctor Laurens was but too happy to have an opportunity of rendering any professional assistance to so distinguished an artist as Higgins; so he stepped promptly forward and offered his services. The artist had struck his head, but was only stunned. The Doctor, however, did as all doctors do on such occasions, whipped out his lancet and bled the patient, while one of his companions, with a bowl of water and a sponge, wiped the burnt cork from the face of the unconscious minstrel.

Higgins presently opened his eyes, and stared wildly about him, while the Doctor shrieked out,

"Good gracious, it is Elegant Tom Dillar!"

Tom was bewildered by the sudden change of scene, and faint and sick from the loss of the blood which Doctor Laurens had been letting out of his veins; but,

bewildered and weak as he was, the sound of the Doctor's voice, and the sight of his astonished countenance, brought Tom to his senses. He knew at once that his secret was discovered, and comprehended in a moment the consequences that must follow its revelation to society.

"Doctor," said he faintly, "it is no use to dissemble further. You know my secret; let me request you to keep it to yourself."

"O! my dear fellow," said the Doctor, "you are perfectly safe in my hands; don't be uneasy. For the credit of my own family, at least, I shall not be likely to proclaim to society that a gentleman who has visited at my house is a member of a troupe of Ethiopian minstrels. I wish you a good evening, sir."

It very oddly happened that, before midnight, all the members of the Manhattan Club, to which the Doctor belonged, knew that Elegant Tom Dillar had retrieved his fortunes by joining the Ethiopian minstrels, and the news was spread all through society before the next day at noon.

Tom received a package early in the morning from Julia, inclosing all the billets-doux and trinkets he had sent her, and requesting a return of all she had ever sent him. The note was as devoid of feeling or sentiment as a lawyer's dunning letter; and Tom wrote one in reply, which was quite as cold and business-like.

"Well," said I to Tom, on meeting him, a few days after his accident, which would very likely have proved fatal to him but for his woolly wig; "Do you intend to give up society or the minstrels?"

"Society!" exclaimed Elegant Tom Dillar, with a sarcastic curve of his finely chiselled lip; "Society be——."

I will not repeat the very coarse expression he used; for, since his new associations, he had grown rather rude and low in his language.

"What should an honest man care for society?" said he. "When I was an idler, living on the property

which my father's industry had procured me, society petted me and cherished me. When I lost my property, society turned a cold shoulder to me, but petted the villain who had robbed me of it. When, by an honest exercise of the only accomplishments I had been taught, I was enabled to appear like a gentleman, society again received me with open arms, although it imagined I was a gambler or a pickpocket; but, when it was found that my money was honestly obtained—that I wronged no one, nor owed any one—society rejects me again, and the girl who was willing to marry me as a swindler, turns her back upon me as an honest man."

I am afraid that Tom was misanthropical; for, as he soon after became possessed of a considerable fortune by the death of a relative, he quitted the minstrels and went to Paris, where, I have heard, he still lives in great splendor, and is famous for his dinners, to which none of his countrymen are ever invited.

There is nothing so real as illusion, nor so narrow as the partitions that divide our wits. We do not have to parallel this experience, anonymously related in the *Yankee Blade*, in order to understand it.

BENTLEY'S SECOND BURIAL.

I HAVE had a singular experience. When I dwell upon it for a great length of time, my mind becomes a little confused. Many people would insist that it was my confusion that caused the trouble. The fact is, my mind had never seemed more active than it was, when this chain of events first began to happen.

I will try to give a clear account of the whole transaction. I am sure I can do this, because I have gone over it all with myself and not the smallest or most trifling incident has escaped me.

I live in a thriving North Texas town. I am a bookkeeper, and have always been considered a quiet, reserved man, who attended to his own business, and who was a good workman—rapid, methodical and clear-headed. I tell this because I have recently heard people say it of me, and because it may help to dispel any impression that I was at all confused.

I had always worked hard, and had indulged in no dissipations, and in very few pleasures. During my boyhood and youth, I had been the only support of my mother and sister, and this responsibility kept me working steadily. While I was still a young man, my mother died, and my sister married, but my habits were formed then, and could not be broken. I went on plodding, in my dull methodical way.

A year ago I fell in love. My brother-in-law had a sister, who went away to school, a little girl, and came back a sweet, bright, winsome young lady. Her presence affected me strangely. I could not talk to her. I scarcely dared raise my eyes to her face. She was

surrounded by admirers wherever she went. The thought of this set me to working feverishly. I worked late into every night, and scarcely looked up from my books all day.

One day a great change came. I found that Mable loved me. I don't know how I made this discovery. I was so happy that this period seems like a dream to me, in looking back. I can only remember that I thought it necessary to work harder than ever. I had a good sum of money laid up, but not enough. I must provide a home for Mabel before I dared to hope to marry. Oh, how I worked, from that time on! How I worked, and denied myself many of the little luxuries to which I had always been accustomed! How deliriously happy I was.

Suddenly I concluded that there was a better field for me in West Texas; I persuaded myself that I could make money more rapidly in San Angelo or El Paso. My friends tried to dissuade me from going, but I was firm. I regretted nothing but the separation from Mabel, and I would be gone but a few months, I told her, and we would hear from one another almost every day. So I went West.

Work was good, and an expert accountant was in demand. I had all I could do—too much, indeed, for my strength—and wages were excellent. But I did not stay as long as I had intended staying. I grew tired and restless, and longed for a sight of Mable's face, so that I could not work to advantage. I had just written her a letter, one day, and had mailed it, when the longing came upon me with such force, that I suddenly resolved to go home the next day and take them by surprise. I had been absent just three months. I arranged matters with my employers, and started the next morning at sunrise.

It was eight o'clock in the evening when I alighted from the train at the home depot, and started up the street, carrying my valise. It was but a short distance to my boarding-house, and I would not take a hack. A number of people were about the depot, but it happened

that I knew none of them, and so I walked away without having spoken to any one.

I had reached the crossing of two of the principal streets, and was watching the distinct outlines of my shadow, under the electric lights. And right there, where the light fell on his face and made it as plain as it could possibly be on the brightest day, I met Bentley.

Bentley was a man whom I had known all my life. We had never been intimate, but there was a pleasant acquaintance between us. Perhaps if I had not been so reserved and solitary, we might have been good friends, for Bentley was a genial man, whom everybody liked.

"What! back again!" he exclaimed, stopping and shaking hands. "Didn't you like it out West?"

"Yes, it's a fine country," I said, glad to see a familiar face. "But home is best, and I was growing homesick."

He laughed pleasantly, and went on his way, and in a few moments I was at home and had forgotten all about the incident, except to think what a coincidence it was that Bentley's should have been the last familiar face that I saw when I was going away, and the first to greet me on my return. For now I remembered that he had passed through the car, just as the train was about to start, and had shaken hands, saying:

"And you are really going? Oh, well, you won't be gone long."

I had a long talk that evening with Mable and my sister and her husband. They all insisted that I looked worn and ill, and my brother-in-law advised me to delay the marriage no longer, as I was evidently working myself to death. He thought I should go away somewhere for a few weeks' recreation, and that I should take Mable with me. I knew that it was all nonsense about my being over-worked, for I never felt fresher or more vigorous, but I could not resist the temptation to consent to an early marriage, and it was decided to hurry the preparations and be ready in a month.

The next day I was passing down the street when I

saw an old friend, Tom Lane, standing under an awning, with Bentley beside him, and I stopped to shake hands with Lane, and nodded to Bentley, who returned the salute with a smile, and moved away a little, as though to give us an opportunity to talk. Lane had many questions to ask concerning my West Texas impressions, and we talked awhile very pleasantly. I was about to go up the street when Lane remarked, with a glance at the northern horizon:

"You will miss your overcoat, Arthur. See that norther coming."

"You think so?" I asked. "What do you think of it, Bentley? You are a weather expert, I believe;" and I turned toward Bentley, who had been standing a little back of my range of vision. To my surprise, he was gone.

"Why, I didn't notice when he went away," I said. "He was there a few minutes ago."

Lane was looking at me in such a peculiar manner that I could not help noticing it. I saw that it was with an effort he controlled himself enough to ask:

"Of whom were you speaking, Arthur?"

"Why, of Bentley," I answered in amazement. "He was with you when I came up. What is the matter, Lane?"

"You don't mean Felix Bentley?" he asked, and I could see that he was turning pale.

"Felix Bentley, of course. Is there any other Bentley in town? Besides, he was by your side when I came up."

Lane suddenly reached out and took hold of my wrist.

"Arthur," he said, with a serious look at me, "surely you know that Bentley is dead! He has been dead for more than a month."

I was amazed at first, and then I began to laugh.

"Well, that is fine! I met Bentley and talked with him last night, and spoke to him under this very awning, and in your presence, not ten minutes ago, and now you tell me that he is dead! He must certainly be a very live corpse!"

"Arthur!" exclaimed Lane, still more earnestly; "Bentley is dead. I helped lay his body in the coffin, and I attended the funeral."

That was too much for endurance. I saw that Lane was ill or unbalanced in some way.

"Are you not well, Tom?" I said anxiously. "If I were you I would see a doctor. I think you have been working too hard."

I parted from him, but I was uneasy about his condition, and looked back over my shoulder as I was about to turn the corner. One of my nearest neighbors had joined him, and they were both looking after me.

"What do you think?" I said to my brother-in-law that afternoon, "I met Lane to-day standing by Felix Bentley's side, and yet when I happened to speak to Bentley, Lane insisted that he was dead. Have you noticed anything wrong with Lane, Amos?"

My brother-in-law looked at me in such a startled way that I was forced to repeat my question. And then, to my great astonishment, he also insisted that Bentley was dead. I began to grow angry at this foolery.

"You will try to persuade me that I have lost my senses, next," I said, with a good deal of irritation.

"If there was any Bentley funeral, it was a fraud, and the wrong person was buried, for Bentley is as much alive as you or I."

Amos looked very grave, after this conversation, and I am certain, now, that it was through his invitation the doctor came up that evening, under the pretense of a friendly visit. We talked a long time, and had a very pleasant evening, but when he arose to depart, he said in his friendly way,—

"Arthur, my boy, you have worked hard ever since I knew you, and it is time you had a little rest. Go down to Galveston or Corpus Christi for a month, and take a good vacation."

I thanked him, and told him I would go when I could take Mabel with me, and so he went away. I left Amos sitting alone by the fire, with that grave look on

his face. I did not feel so friendly toward him since our dispute of the afternoon. It was extremely unreasonable in Amos to insist that Bentley was dead, when I knew that he was alive.

The next evening one of my bachelor friends gave a dinner in honor of my return. Ten or twelve gentlemen were present, all of them men whom I liked. As the party gathered in the parlor before dinner was served, I noticed that some serious matter was being discussed in groups here and there. I did not succeed in finding what it was, because there was always silence or a change of subject when I drew near.

When dinner was served, we passed into the dining-room, my friend and I leading the way. As I reached my place and turned, there among the crowd approaching the table, was Felix Bentley, looking at me and smiling pleasantly.

"There, Lane!" I cried, leaning forward and pointing; "and you too, Amos! I hope you are satisfied now! There is your dead man, whose funeral you both attended! Come up here, Bentley, and let these people see who is right." He started through the crowd, as though to come, but he did not reach me, and when I went to look for him he was gone. The guests all fell back from the table, and from me in confusion, and most of them returned precipitately to the parlor. I was indignant, and readily yielded to Amos's suggestion that we should go home. "I think this whole town has gone crazy," I remarked to him, on the way home. He talked with his wife and sister after I had retired, and I afterward heard Mabel weeping quietly as she went to her room.

From that time on I could see people watching me wherever I went. I was much annoyed, but I did not let them see it. I held myself aloof from every one, even from my sister and Mabel, because I felt that they were in conspiracy against me. I began to see that no more preparations were being made for our wedding.

One day in turning a corner suddenly I met a little

schoolboy. He started back as though he had met a wild beast, and turned and ran as fast as he could go. I was angry to think that a child should be afraid of me, and I took up a small rock from the pavement and threw it after him. I had not intended to strike him with it, but unfortunately it hit him, and I heard him scream. I ran after him, intending to catch him and then pet and soothe him until I got him quiet. I was so sorry for a child to be afraid of me. But he outran me. I did not succeed in catching him.

The next day I heard that the schools were temporarily closed. The children were all afraid to venture upon the streets. Then I went home and shut myself up in my room.

Amos came in the night, and urged me to go with him to Galveston. I consented, though I had quite another plan. We left at midnight on a freight train, and we lumbered heavily along for many weary miles.

At Dallas I managed to elude Amos, and while he was looking for me I was already speeding southward.

I was willing to go to Galveston, but I did not need a guardian.

The train had just passed McKinney, when I looked up from a book I was reading, and saw Bentley walking down the aisle.

"What! you here?" I exclaimed, and I arose and moved my valise, making room for him to sit beside me. He sat down and I went on, talking loud, to raise my voice above the roar of the train.

"You have given me plenty of trouble, Bentley. I can't convince those stupid people back yonder that you are not dead. Between you and me, there's something wrong, mentally, with nine-tenths of the people in that town."

"More than that," said Bentley, quietly.

"Perhaps so; no doubt. I wish they could look in and see you now. By the way, what became of you on the evening of that dinner?"

Before Bentley could reply, I was attracted by a general movement in the car, and looking round, found

that the passengers were all escaping into another car, with frightened backward glances at me. Directly the conductor came in, and asked me if I were sick. I started to tell him all about Bentley, but discovered that Bentley was gone, so I said nothing.

I began to be very cunning. I knew that telegrams would be sent ahead, and an effort would be made to stop me at Ennis, so I determined to escape. I was my own master. As the train was slowing up to approach the depot at Ennis, I sprang off on the opposite side, and plunged into the prairie.

I wandered along many roads and over a wide country. The next morning, just at sunrise, I saw that I was approaching a river. It was the Trinity, an old negro told me, and I was approaching an old point called Teleco. It was the point where the printer had been buried, he said; the printer who had died with consumption on a boating trip down the river. I left the old negro still talking, and went down to Teleco.

There, upon a small level field, high above the river, was a grave, and on the grave sat Bentley. He turned and smiled when he saw me coming.

"Oh, you are here!" I screamed, for I was growing furious. "You have been following me, I see. If it had not been for you I would be safe at home now, the happiest man in all the land. I am tired of you. I will kill you, and see if you will stay dead this time."

Then I took up a heavy stick and killed him. It was quite easy to do. He did not resist, and made no outcry. I dug a grave on the side of the bank where the sand was loose, and rolled him in and covered him up.

I felt almost happy as I did it, for I was sure I would see him no more.

At the top of the hill I met Amos and some other men with a carriage and horses. The old negro was coming with them to show them the way. I willingly entered the carriage with Amos, and we turned toward Ennis.

"It's all right, Amos," I said. "Bentley is dead

now, I know, for I killed him myself, and buried him down there beside the river."

I was sick after that—quite sick—I have heard since. I am just now beginning to improve. I write this just as it happened in every particular; for our doctor is a cunning fellow, and he and my wife will soon have me convinced that my mind was a little upset from overwork, and that black is white, and white is black, and that none of this happened at all. But one thing is certain; and that is that Bentley has continued to sleep since I buried him at Teleco.

The pretence of vice and the reality of virtue are not in the direction toward which most of man's weaknesses incline. In the case of "My Friend Slaughter," François Coppée has discovered hypocrisy in its most engaging aspect.

MY FRIEND SLAUGHTER.

It was when I was an office clerk.

Every day, from ten to four, I was a voluntary prisoner in a weary bureau, hung with yellow portfolios, and reeking with the sickening odors of old papers. There I lunched on Italian cheese and potatoes that I cooked in the open-mouthed stove; there I read the newspapers, even the advertisements; rhymed sorry verses; and there I even transacted affairs of state, in order, at the end of the month, to get hold of a sum of money which just kept me from dying of hunger.

One of my companions in captivity I remember well.

His name was Achilles Slaughter, and certainly from his ferocious aspect and his great height he was worthy of the name. Slaughter was a devil of a fellow, about forty years old; he had neither great breadth of chest or shoulders, but he dressed himself as if he had; he wore a wide-brimmed felt hat, jackets ample and short; capacious, checked trousers, and red cravats under a turn-down collar. He had a full beard, bushy hair—then a little gray—and he was very proud of his hairy hands.

The only affectation of Slaughter—for he was the sweetest and best of companions—was his pretension to an athletic constitution, of possessing the biceps of a Discobolus, and, as he himself phrased it, of not really knowing his own strength. He never made the slightest gesture, even in the exercise of his peaceful profession, which was not intended to convince whoever was standing by of his prodigious vigor. When he had to take down a portfolio, even if it was almost empty, he walked toward the shelf with the ponderous step of a porter, seized the portfolio with a tight grip, arm ex-

tended, and carried it to the nearest table, with raised shoulders and a frowning brow worthy of the Crotonian Milo. He carried this so far, that he never raised the lightest object except in the same manner. Once, when he was carrying out a basket of old papers, I saw him extend his left arm horizontally as if to balance the mighty burden.

I must say that his strength inspired me with great respect; nor was the conversation of Slaughter of a nature to lessen the admiration I felt for him.

Above all, Monday morning—he could scarcely wait to tell me of his deeds of valor, his feats of strength. After having hung up his hat, his coat and his waistcoat, and having unbuttoned his shirt-collar and cuffs, in order to hint at his fiery, inflammable temperament, he would plunge his hands in his pockets and, seated near me, in an attitude superb in its cool assurance, would begin a recital in something like this style:

"My dear fellow! Such a Sunday! Verily there was no sort of fatigue that I did not encounter. Fancy this! Yesterday was the regatta at Joinville-le-Pont. At six o'clock in the morning rendezvous at Bercy, 'Sign of the Ship,' for the crew of 'the Marsouin.' Already such a sun! A glass of white wine; jump into our suits of tricot, cotton trousers; seize an oar. Lay hold now! One . . . two . . . three . . . We are at Joinville. There—a bath before breakfast. Hein! Quick, some trunks, a leap overboard, now the shell. When I had taken my turn, I had the appetite of a demon. Good. I laid hold of the boat with one hand, and said to the coxswain: 'Charpentier, hand me a little ham.' One, two, three mouthfuls; I had nearly devoured it. 'Charpentier, pass me a flask of brandy.' Two swallows and it was drained . . . . Now some more measures for digestion."

Thus the description continued, dazzling, Homeric.

It was the hour for the regatta. It was noon; the sun streamed down. The canoes placed themselves in line in the river, sparkling with sunbeams, and in front of a tent gay with fluttering pennons. One saw on the

bank the mayor in his scarf, the police in their yellow shoulder-belts, a swarm of summer toilettes, of open umbrellas and straw hats. Poum! Off goes the rocket; it is the signal. The Marsouin shoots by like an arrow, wins off-hand, and carries away the prize.

Fatigued? not a bit. Round the tower at Marne and return to dinner at Créteil. The night comes on cool. In the shadowy arbor the lighted pipes show like constellations. At the end of dessert, served here, there, where you will, the sound of the cornet at the ball at Willis's. In place for the quadrille! But hold! a rival crew, vanquished that very morning, had secured all the pretty laundresses. To the rescue! Now for broken teeth, black eyes, broken bones, blows on head, below the belt—in a word, a whole poem of bodily enthusiasm, of brawling joy, of overflowing health, not to speak of the return at midnight, of crowded stations, of women hoisted into the cars, of friends separated and calling to one another from one end of the train to the other, and the horns of the guard on the top.

The evenings of my astonishing friend were no less exciting than his Sundays. Open-handed wrestlings in tents, by torch-light, between himself, an amateur merely, and Dubois, the man-cannon; rat-hunts at sewer mouths with terriers as ferocious as tigers; bloody encounters at night in the dangerous quarters with gangs of roughs, known under terrible names—such were the insignificant episodes of Slaughter's nocturnal life. I scarcely dare recall other feats of prowess of a more intimate character before which, as they used to say in romances, the most fearless pen recoils with horror.

Painful as it is to avow it, I must confess that my admiration of Slaughter was tempered with regret and bitterness. Perhaps there was in it even something of envy. But never did the recital of his most marvellous exploit awaken in me the least suspicion of incredulity, and Achilles Slaughter early found a place in my mind between heroes and demigods, between Roland and Pirithous.

II.

At this same time I wandered much about the suburbs, spending my idle summer evenings in solitary walks in these far-off regions, as unknown to the Parisian of the boulevard as the country of the Caribees, and of which I hope later to celebrate in verse its melancholy charm.

One hot and dusty evening in July, just as the gas jets were beginning to shine through the twilight mists, I returned, walking slowly from the outskirts of Vaugirard. I chose one of the long and weary streets of the Faubourg, framed in by houses of unequal height, where the concierges sit in the doorway in shirt-sleeves and short gowns, fancying they are taking the air. At long distances a mason, white with plaster passes, by; a policeman, or a child with a loaf of bread longer than itself; or, perhaps, a young girl hurrying along, in bonnet and waterproof, with a leather bag on her arm; and every quarter of an hour a half-empty omnibus returning to the station to the dull trot of its weary horses.

Walking in the middle of the street, for the asphalt foot-path was as yet an unknown luxury in these parts, I wandered along in the street tasting the small, but sweet, joys of the saunterer. Sometimes I stopped before an empty lot, peering through the decaying fence to see, in the greenish, sky the after-glow fade behind the black silhouette of some tall factory chimney. Then, sometimes, a glance of the eye would reveal, through an open window, a picturesque and familiar interior: here a fine buxom laundress holding her iron up to her cheek, and there some workmen at table in a wine-shop; before them an old street singer, with long gray locks, his voice quavering on the word "Liberty," and accompanying himself on a guitar the color of greasy soup,—Chardins, Van Ostades, all.

Suddenly I stopped. One of these domestic interiors in an instant won my attention by its charming air of simplicity and comfort.

She was so happy and contented in her little faded

parlor, this good old lady in her black dress and widow's cap, seated in the depths of an easy-chair covered with greenish Utrecht velvet, her hands peaceably clasped across her knees. Everything around her was old and modest, and seemed to be preserved, less through discreet economy, than from its sacredness as a souvenir; doubtless of her honeymoon, passed with the gentleman in the coat *à la* Goethe, the flowered waistcoat, and complexion a little browned by time, whose oval pastel adorned the wall.

The two lights on the mantel were sufficient to permit me to distinguish the old bits of furniture in the room—the clock, mounted on a painted fish carved out of marble; the upright piano of forgotten form, on which young women, in mutton-leg sleeves and hair *à la* Greek, used to play airs that were doubtless from Romagnesi.

I was confident that a child, an only one and well beloved, had filially remained unmarried to care tenderly for the old widow. It was she who had so carefully seated the old mother, who had put the cushion under her feet, who had wheeled near her this little marquetry table, and placed on it that salver and those two cups; I waited to see her come in, bringing the evening coffee—this daughter, sweet and calm, who would be dressed in mourning like the old lady, and who would greatly resemble her.

Absorbed in the enjoyment of a scene so sympathetic, and in the pleasure of imagining this humble poem, I was standing before the open window, confident I would not be observed in the dark street, when I saw a door open in the back of the old-fashioned room and suddenly appear—oh, how far from my thought!—my companion, Slaughter himself, the hero of all the tilts on the river, and of numerous struggling, wrestling matches.

A swift doubt crossed my mind; I felt that I was on the point of discovering a secret.

It was he, sure enough! His terrible hairy hand held a little silver coffee pot; he was accompanied by a poodle which played around his legs—a brave and

classic poodle, the poodle of the blind men who play clarionettes, the poodle of the *Convoi des Pauvre* of Vigneron, the poodle shaved like a lion, with cuffs of hair on his four legs and a moustache as large as that of a stage general.

"Mamma," said the giant, in a voice ineffably sweet, "here is your coffee. I think you will find it very nice this evening. The water had thoroughly boiled, and I poured it drop by drop."

"Thanks," answered the old lady, rolling her easy-chair toward the table with the movement of enfeebled old age.

"Thanks, my little Achilles. Your dear papa often told me I had no rival in making coffee. He was so indulgent, so good; poor excellent man! But I am beginning to think that you make it still better than I."

At this moment, as Slaughter poured out the hot coffee, delicately as a young girl thinking about getting married, the dog by his discovery of the sugar-bowl placed his two fore-paws on his mistress's knees.

"Down, Medor!" she cried with indignation. "Did you ever see such a provoking dog! Come, sir, you know very well that your master never forgets to give you the bottom of the cup. Be quiet a moment, if you can. By the way," she turned to her son, "you have taken this poor creature out to walk to-day."

"Certainly, mamma," he answered, in a voice almost infantile. "When I went to the dairy for the morning's milk I put Medor's leader and collar on, and took him with me. And he feels now, quite comfortable. Don't fear, mamma, he's all right."

Reassured on the important point of the dog's health, the good lady drank her coffee with the air of an epicure, watched with inexpressible tenderness by both her son and the poodle.

It was needless to hear and see further. I knew already what sort of family life,—peaceful, narrow, pure, resigned,—my friend Slaughter hid under his fanciful bravado. But the view that chance had given me was at the same time so humorous and so touching that I

could not resist the pleasure of enjoying it a few minutes, and this indiscretion was sufficient for me to learn the real truth.

Yes, this type of a vulgar man about town, which seemed to have escaped out of one of Paul de Kock's novels; this despot of wine shops and public houses, performed simply, courageously, in this poor home in the outskirts of the town, the sublime duties of a sister of charity. This dashing oarsman had made no longer voyages than the journey to mass or vespers on Sunday with his mother. This professor of billiards could only play bezique; this breaker-in of bull-dogs was enslaved by a poodle. This Ralph Royster Doyster was an Antigone.

The next morning, when I went to the office, I asked Slaughter how he had spent his evening. Without the least hesitation he spun for me the story of a bloody affair which took place at two o'clock that morning in the Boulevard d'Enfer, when he had knocked down, with one blow of the fist, and his thumb passed through his key-ring, one of the dangerous prowlers around the outskirts of Paris.

I listened with an ironical smile, and I meant to confuse him; but, remembering how praiseworthy is goodness which hides itself, even if it has a funny side, I struck him in friendly fashion on the shoulder, and said to him, meaning it too:

"Slaughter, you are a hero."

Men frequently mistake their calling. The burglar in this story of Conan Doyle's, with his skill in constructing a plot, and with his sense of humor, might have become a successful novelist and never been overtaken in his crimes.

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE.

I had called upon my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, one day in the autumn of last year, and found him in deep conversation with a very stout, florid-faced, elderly gentleman, with fiery red hair. With an apology for my intrusion, I was about to withdraw, when Holmes pulled me abruptly into the room, and closed the door behind me.

"You could not possibly have come at a better time, my dear Watson," he said cordially. "This gentleman, Mr. Wilson, has been my partner and helper in many of my most successful cases, and I have no doubt that he will be of the utmost use to me in yours, also."

The stout gentleman half rose from his chair, and gave a bob of greeting, with a quick little questioning glance from his small, fat-encircled eyes.

"Try the settee," said Holmes, relapsing into his arm-chair, and putting his finger-tips together, as was his custom when in judicial moods. "I know, my dear Watson, that you share my love for all that is bizarre and outside the conventions and humdrum routine of every-day life. Now, Mr. Jabez Wilson here has been good enough to call upon me this morning, and to begin a narrative which promises to be one of the most singular which I have listened to for some time. Perhaps, Mr. Wilson, you would have the great kindness to re-commence your narration. I ask you, not merely because my friend Dr. Watson has not heard the opening part, but also because the peculiar nature of the story makes me anxious to have every possible detail from your lips."

The portly client puffed out his chest with an appearance of some pride, and pulled a dirty and wrinkled newspaper from the inside pocket of his great coat. As he glanced down the advertisement column, with his head thrust forward, and the paper flattened out upon his knee, I took a good look at the man, and endeavored, after the fashion of my companion, to read the indications which might be presented by his dress or appearance. I did not gain very much, however, by my inspection. Our visitor bore every mark of being an average commonplace British tradesman, obese, pompous, and slow. He wore rather baggy gray shepherd's check trousers, a not over-clean black frock-coat, unbuttoned in the front, and a drab waistcoat, with a heavy brassy Albert chain, and a square pierced bit of metal dangling down as an ornament. A frayed top hat and faded brown overcoat, with a wrinkled velvet collar, lay upon a chair beside him. Altogether, look as I would, there was nothing remarkable about the man save his blazing red head and the expression of extreme chagrin and discontent upon his features.

"Can you not find the advertisement, Mr. Wilson?" asked Holmes.

Yes, I have got it now," he answered, with his thick, red finger planted half-way down the column. "Here it is. This is what began it all. You just read it for yourself, sir."

I took the paper from him, and read as follows:

"'To the Red-Headed League. On account of the bequest of the late Ezekiah Hopkins, of Lebanon, Penn., U. S. A., there is now another vacancy open which entitles a member of the League to a salary of four pounds a week for purely nominal services. All red-headed men who are sound in body and mind, and above the age of twenty-one years, are eligible. Apply in person on Monday, at eleven o'clock, to Duncan Ross, at the offices of the League, 7 Pope's Court, Fleet Street.'"

"What on earth does this mean?" I ejaculated, after I had twice read over the extraordinary announcement.

Holmes chuckled and wriggled in his chair, as was his habit when in high spirits. "It is a little off the beaten track, isn't it?" said he. "And now, Mr. Wilson, off you go at scratch, and tell us all about yourself, your household, and the effect which this advertisement had upon your fortunes. You will first make a note, Doctor, of the paper and the date."

"It is the *Morning Chronicle* of April 27, 1890—just two months ago."

"Very good. Now, Mr. Wilson?"

"Well, it is just as I have been telling you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said Jabez Wilson, mopping his forehead. "I have a small pawnbroker's business at Coburg Square, near the city. It's not a very large affair, and of late years it has not done more than just give me a living. I used to be able to keep two assistants, but now I only keep one; and I would have a job to pay him, but that he is willing to come for half wages, so as to learn the business."

"What is the name of this obliging youth?" asked Sherlock Holmes.

"His name is Vincent Spaulding, and he's not such a youth either. It's hard to say his age. I should not wish a smarter assistant, Mr. Holmes; and I know very well that he could better himself and earn twice what I am able to give him. But after all, if he is satisfied, why should I put ideas in his head? He has his faults, too. Never was such a fellow for photography. Snapping away with a camera when he ought to be improving his mind, and then diving down into the cellar like a rabbit into its hole to develop his pictures."

"He is still with you, I presume?"

"Yes, sir. He and a girl of fourteen, who does a bit of simple cooking, and keeps the place clean—that's all I have in the house, for I am a widower, and never had any family. We live very quietly, sir, the three of us; and we keep a roof over our heads, and pay our debts, if we do nothing more.

"The first thing that put us out was that advertisement. Spaulding, he came down into the office, just

this day eight weeks, with this very paper in his hand, and he says:

"'I wish to the Lord, Mr. Wilson, that I was a red-headed man.'

"'Why that?' I asks.

"'Why,' says he, 'here's another vacancy on the League of the Red-Headed Men. It's worth quite a little fortune to any man who gets it. If my hair would only change color, here's a nice little crib all ready for me to step into.'

"'Why, what is it, then?' I asked. You see, Mr. Holmes, I am a very stay-at-home man, and, as my business comes to me instead of my having to go to it, I was often weeks on end without putting my foot over the door-mat. In that way I didn't know much of what was going on outside, and I was always glad of a bit of news.

"'Have you never heard of the League of Red-Headed Men?' he asked, with his eyes open. 'Why, I wonder at that, for you are eligible yourself for one of the vacancies.'

"'And what are they worth?' I asked.

"'Oh, merely a couple of hundred a year; but the work is slight and it need not interfere very much with one's other occupations.'

"Well, you can easily think that that made me prick up my ears. 'Tell me all about it,' said I.

"'Well' said he, showing me the advertisement, 'you can see for yourself that the League has a vacancy, and there is the address where you should apply for particulars. As far as I can make out, the League was founded by an American millionaire, Ezekiah Hopkins, who was very peculiar in his ways. He was himself red-headed, and he had a great sympathy for all red-headed men; so, when he died, it was found that he had left his enormous fortune in the hands of trustees, with instructions to apply the interest to the providing of easy berths to men whose hair is of that color. From all I hear it is splendid pay, and very little to do."

"'But,' said I, 'there would be millions of red-headed men who would apply.'

"'Not so many as you might think,' he answered. 'You see it is really confined to Londoners, and to grown men. This American had started from London when he was young, and he wanted to do the old town a good turn. Then, again, I have heard it is no use your applying if your hair is light red, or dark red, or anything but real, bright, blazing, fiery red.'

"Now, it is a fact, gentlemen, as you may see for yourselves, that my hair is of a very full and rich tint, so that it seemed to me that, if there was to be any competition in the matter, I stood as good a chance as any man that I had ever met. Vincent Spaulding seemed to know so much about it that I thought he might prove useful, so I just ordered him to put up the shutters for the day, and to come right away with me. He was very willing to have a holiday, so we shut the business up, and started off for the address that was given us in the advertisement.

"I never hope to see such a sight as that again, Mr. Holmes. From north, south, east, and west every man who had a shade of red in his hair had tramped into the city to answer the advertisement. Fleet Street was choked with red-headed folk, and Pope's Court looked like a coster's orange-barrow. When I saw how many were waiting, I would have given up in despair; but Spaulding would not hear of it. How he did it I could not imagine, but he pushed and pulled and butted until he got me through the crowd, and right up to the steps which led to the office. There was a double stream upon the stair, some going up in hope, and some coming back dejected; but we wedged in as well as we could, and soon found ourselves in the office."

"Your experience has been a most entertaining one," remarked Holmes, as his client paused, and refreshed his memory with a huge pinch of snuff. "Pray continue your very interesting statement."

"There was nothing in the office but a couple of wooden chairs and a deal table, behind which sat a

small man, with a head that was even redder than mine. He said a few words to each candidate as he came up, and then he always managed to find some fault in them which would disqualify them. Getting a vacancy did not seem to be such a very easy matter after all. However, when our turn came, the little man was much more favorable to me than to any of the others, and closed the door as we entered, so that he might have a private word with us.

"'This is Mr. Jabez Wilson,' said my assistant, 'and he is willing to fill a vacancy in the League.'

"'And he is admirably suited for it,' the other answered. 'He has every requirement. I cannot recall when I have seen anything so fine.' He took a step backwards, cocked his head on one side, and gazed at my hair until I felt quite bashful. Then suddenly he plunged forward, wrung my hand, and congratulated me warmly on my success.

"'It would be injustice to hesitate,' said he. 'You will, however, I am sure, excuse me for taking an obvious precaution.' With that he seized my hair in both his hands, and tugged until I yelled with the pain. 'There is water in your eyes,' said he, as he released me. 'I perceive that all is as it should be. But we have to be careful, for we have twice been deceived by wigs and once by paint. I could tell you tales of cobbler's wax which would disgust you with human nature. He stepped over to the window and shouted through it at the top of his voice that the vacancy was filled. A groan of disappointment came up from below, and the folk all trooped away in different directions, until there was not a red head to be seen except my own and that of the manager.

"'My name,' said he, 'is Mr. Duncan Ross, and I am myself one of the pensioners upon the fund left by our noble benefactor. When shall you be able to enter upon your new duties?'

"'Well, it is a little awkward, for I have a business already,' said I.

"'Oh, never mind about that, Mr. Wilson!' said

Vincent Spaulding. 'I shall be able to look after that for you.'

"'What would be the hours?' I asked.

"'Ten to two.'

"Now a pawnbroker's business is mostly done of an evening, Mr. Holmes, especially Thursday and Friday evening, which is just before pay-day; so it would suit me very well to earn a little in the mornings. Besidse, I knew that my assistant was a good man, and that he would see to anything that turned up.

"'That would suit me very well,' said I. 'And the pay?'

"'It is four pounds a week.'

"'And the work?'

"'Well you have to be in the office, or at least in the building, the whole time. If you leave, you forfeit your whole position forever. The will is very clear upon that point. You don't comply with the conditions if you budge from the office during that time.'

"'It is only four hours a day, and I should not think of leaving,' said I.

"'No excuse will avail,' said Mr. Duncan Ross, 'neither sickness, nor business, nor anything else. There you must stay, or you lose your billet.'

"'And the work?'

"'Is to copy out the "Encyclopædia Britannica." There is the first volume of it in that press. You must find your own ink, pens, and blotting-paper, but we provide this table and chair. Will you be ready to-morrow?'

"'Certainly,' I answered.

"'Then, good-bye, Mr. Jabez Wilson, and let me congratulate you once more on the important position which you have been fortunate enough to gain.' He bowed me out of the room, and I went home with my assistant, hardly knowing what to say or do, I was so pleased at my own good fortune.

"Well, I thought over the matter all day, and by evening I was in low spirits again; for I had quite persuaded myself that the whole affair must be some

great hoax or fraud, though what its object might be I could not imagine. Vincent Spaulding did what he could to cheer me up, but by bed-time I had reasoned myself out of the whole thing. However, in the morning I determined to have a look at it anyhow, so I bought a penny bottle of ink, and with a quill pen and seven sheets of foolscap paper I started off for Pope's Court.

"Well, to my surprise and delight everything was as right as possible. The table was set out ready for me, and Mr. Duncan Ross was there to see that I got fairly to work. He started me off upon the letter A, and then he left me; but he would drop in from time to time to see that all was right with me. At two o'clock he bade me good-day, complimented me upon the amount that I had written, and locked the door of the office after me.

"This went on day after day, Mr. Holmes, and on Saturday the manager came in and planked down four golden sovereigns for my week's work. It was the same next week, and the same the week after. Every morning I was there at ten, and every afternoon I left at two. By degrees Mr. Duncan Ross took to coming in only once of a morning, and then, after a time, he did not come in at all. Still, of course, I never dared to leave the room for an instant, for I was not sure when he might come, and the billet was such a good one, and suited me so well, that I would not risk the loss of it.

"Eight weeks passed away like this, and I had written about Abbots, and Archery, and Armour, and Architecture, and Attica, and hoped with diligence that I might get on to the Bs before long. It cost me something in foolscap, and I had pretty nearly filled a shelf with my writings. And then suddenly the whole business came to an end."

"To an end?"

"Yes, sir. And no later than this morning. I went to my work as usual at ten o'clock, but the door was shut and locked, with a little square of cardboard hammered on to the middle of the panel with a tack. Here it is, and you can read for yourself."

He held up a piece of paper cardboard, about the size of a sheet of note paper. It read in this fashion:

"THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE
IS DISSOLVED. OCT. 9, 1890."

Sherlock Holmes and I surveyed this curt announcement and the rueful face behind it, until the comical side of the affair so completely overtopped every other consideration that we both burst out into a roar of laughter.

"Pray what steps did you take when you found the card upon the door?" at last inquired Holmes.

"I was staggered, sir. I did not know what to do. Then I called at the offices round, but none of them seemed to know anything about it. Finally, I went to the landlord, who is an accountant living on the ground floor, and I asked him if he could tell me what had become of the Red-Headed League. He said that he had never heard of any such body. Then I asked him who Mr. Duncan Ross was. He answered that the name was new to him."

"'Well,' said I, 'the gentleman at No. 4.'

"'Oh,' said he, 'the red-headed man? His name was William Morris. He was a solicitor, and was using my room as a temporary convenience until his new premises were ready. He moved out yesterday to his new offices, No. 17 King Edward Street, near St. Paul's.'

"I started off, Mr. Holmes, but when I got to that address it was a manufactory of artificial knee-caps, and no one in it had ever heard of either Mr. William Morris or Mr. Duncan Ross, so I went home to Saxe-Coburg Square, and I took the advice of my assistant. But he could not help me in any way. He could only say that, if I waited, I should hear by post. But that was not quite good enough, Mr. Holmes. I did not wish to lose such a place without a struggle, so as I had heard that you were good enough to give advice to poor folk who needed it, I came right away to you."

"And you did very wisely," said Holmes. "Your case is an exceedingly remarkable one, I shall be happy to look into it. From what you have told me I think

that it is possible that graver issues hang from it than might at first sight appear."

"Grave enough!" said Mr. Jabez Wilson. "Why, I have lost four pound a week."

"As far as you are personally concerned," remarked Holmes, "I do not see that you have any grievance against this extraordinary league. On the contrary, you are, as I understand, richer by some thirty pounds, to say nothing of the minute knowledge which you have gained on every subject which comes under the letter A. You have lost nothing by them."

"No, sir. But I want to find out about them, and who they are, and what their object was in playing this prank—if it was a prank—upon me. It was pretty expensive for them, for it cost them two and thirty pounds."

"We shall endeavor to clear up these points for you. And, first, one or two questions, Mr. Wilson. This assistant of yours who first called your attention to the advertisement—how long had he been with you?"

"About a month then."

"What is he like, this Vincent Spaulding?"

"Small, stout built, very quick in his ways, no hair on his face, though he is not short of thirty. Has a white splash of acid on his forehead."

Holmes sat up in his chair in considerable excitement. "I thought as much," said he.

"Have you ever observed that his ears are pierced for earrings?"

'Yes, sir. He told me that a gipsy had done it for him, when he was a lad."

"Hum!" said Holmes, sinking back in deep thought. "That will do, Mr. Wilson. I shall be happy to give you an opinion upon the subject in the course of a day or two. To-day is Saturday, and I hope that by Monday we may come to a conclusion."

"Well, Watson," said Holmes, when our visitor had left us, "what do you make of it all?"

"I make nothing of it," I answered, frankly. "It is a most mysterious business."

"As a rule," said Holmes, "the more bizarre a thing

is the less mysterious it proves to be. It is your commonplace featureless crimes which are really puzzling, just as a commonplace face is the most difficult to identify. But I must be prompt over this matter."

"What are you going to do then?" I asked.

"To smoke," he answered. "It is quite a three-pipe problem, and I beg that you won't speak to me for fifty minutes." He curled himself up in his chair, with his thin knees drawn up to his hawk-like nose, and there he sat with his eyes closed and his black clay pipe thrusting out like the bill of some strange bird. I had come to the conclusion that he had dropped asleep, and indeed was nodding myself, when he suddenly sprang out of his chair with the gesture of a man who has made up his mind, and put his pipe down upon the mantelpiece.

"Sarasate plays at the St. James' Hall this afternoon," he remarked. "What do you think, Watson? Could your patients spare you for a few hours?"

"I have nothing to do to-day. My practice is never very absorbing."

"Then put on your hat, and come. I am going through the city first, and we can lunch on the way."

We travelled by the underground as far as Aldersgate; and a short walk took us to Saxe-Coburg Square, the scene of the singular story which we had listened to in the morning. It was a pokey, little, shabby-genteel place, where four lines of dingy two-storied brick houses looked out into a small railed-in enclosure, where a lawn of weedy grass and a few clumps of faded laurel-bushes made a hard fight against a smoke-laden and uncongenial atmosphere. Three gilt balls and a brown board with "Jabez Wilson" in white letters, upon a corner house, announced the place where our red-headed client carried on his business. Sherlock Holmes stopped in front of it with his head on one side, and looked it all over. Then he walked slowly up the street, and then down again to the corner, still looking keenly at the houses. Finally he returned to the pawnbrokers, and having thumped vigorously upon the

pavement with his stick two or three times, he went up to the door and knocked. It was instantly opened by a bright-looking, clean-shaven young fellow, who asked him to step in.

"Thank you," said Holmes. "I only wished to ask you how you would go from here to the Strand."

"Third right, fourth left," answered the assistant promptly, closing the door.

"Smart fellow, that," observed Holmes as we walked away. "He is, in my judgment, the fourth smartest man in London, and for daring I am not sure that he has not a claim to be third. I have known something of him before."

"Evidently," said I, "Mr. Wilson's assistant counts for a good deal in this mystery of the Red-Headed League. I am sure that you inquired your way merely in order that you might see him."

"Not him."

"What then?"

"The knee of his trousers. Now we know something of Saxe-Coburg Square, let us explore the parts which lie behind it."

The road in which we found ourselves, as we turned round the corner form the retired Saxe-Coburg Square, presented as great a contrast to it as the front of a picture does to the back. It was one of the main arteries which convey the traffic of the city to the north and west. The roadway was blocked with the immense stream of commerce flowing in a double tide inwards and outwards, while the footpaths were black with the hurrying swarm of pedestrians. It was difficult to realize, as we looked at the line of fine shops and stately business premises, that they really abutted on the other side upon the faded, stagnant square we had just quitted.

"Let me see," said Holmes, standing at the corner, and glancing along the line, "I should like to remember the order of the houses here. It is a hobby of mine to have an exact knowledge of London. There is Mortimer's, the tobacconist, the little newspaper shop, the Coburg branch of the City and Sub-

urban Bank, the Vegetarian Restaurant, and McFarlane's carriage-building depot. That carries us right on to the other block. And now, Doctor, we've done our work, so it's time we had some play. A sandwich and a cup of coffee, and then off to violin-land, where all is sweetness, and delicacy, and harmony, and no red-headed clients to vex us with their conundrums."

"You want to go home, no doubt, Doctor," he remarked, as we emerged from St. James's Hall two hours later.

"Yes, it would be as well."

"And I have some business to do which will take some hours. This business at Coburg Square is serious. I shall want your help to-night."

"At what time?"

"Ten will be early enough."

"I shall be at Baker Street at ten."

"Very well. And, I say, Doctor! there may be some little danger, so kindly put your army revolver in your pocket."

He waved his hand, turned on his heel, and disappeared in an instant among the crowd.

It was a quarter past nine when I started from home and made my way across the Park, and so through Oxford Street to Baker Street. Two hansoms were standing at the door, and, as I entered the passage, I heard the sound of voices from above. On entering his room, I found Holmes in animated conversation with two men, one of whom I recognized as Peter Jones, the official police agent, while the other was a long, thin, sad-faced man, with a very shiny hat and oppressively respectable frock coat.

"Ha! our party is complete," said Holmes, buttoning up his pea-jacket and taking his heavy hunting crop from the rack. "Watson, I think you know Mr. Jones of Scotland Yard? Let me introduce you to Mr. Merryweather, who is to be our companion in to-night's adventure."

"We're hunting in couples again, Doctor, you see," said Jones, in his consequential way. "Our friend

here is a wonderful man for starting a chase. All he wants is an old dog to help him to do the running down."

"I hope a wild goose may not prove to be the end of our chase," observed Mr. Merryweather, gloomily. "I confess that I miss my rubber. It is the first Saturday night for seven-and-twenty years that I have not had my rubber."

"I think you will find," said Sherlock Holmes, "that you will play for a higher stake to-night than you have ever done yet, and that the play will be more exciting. For you, Mr. Merryweather, the stake will be some thirty thousand pounds; and for you, Jones, it will be the man upon whom you wish to lay your hands."

"John Clay, the murderer, thief, smasher, and forger," said the police agent in explanation. "He's a young man, Mr. Merryweather, but he is at the head of his profession, and I would rather have my bracelets on him than on any criminal in London. He's a remarkable man, is young John Clay. His grandfather was a Royal Duke, and he himself has been to Eton and Oxford. His brain is as cunning as his fingers, and though we meet signs of him at every turn, we never know where to find the man himself. He'll crack a crib in Scotland one week and be raising money to build an orphanage in Cornwall the next. I've been on his track for years, and have never set eyes on him yet."

"I hope that I may have the pleasure of introducing you to-night. I've had one or two little turns also with Mr. John Clay, and I agree with you that he is at the head of his profession. It is past ten, however, and quite time that we started. If you two will take the first hansom, Watson and I will follow in the second."

Sherlock Holmes was not very communicative during the long drive, and lay back in the cab humming the tunes which he had heard in the afternoon. We rattled through an endless labyrinth of gas-lit streets until we emerged into Farrington Street, and had reached the same crowded thoroughfare in which we had found ourselves in the morning. Our cabs were dismissed, and,

following the guidance of Mr. Merryweather, we passed down a narrow passage, and through a side door, which he opened for us. Within there was a small corridor, which ended in a very massive iron gate. This also was opened, and led down a flight of winding stone steps, which terminated at another formidable gate. Mr. Merryweather stopped to light a lantern, and then conducted us down a dark, earth-smelling passage, and so, after opening a third door, into a huge vault or cellar, which was piled all around with crates and massive boxes.

"You are not very vulnerable from above," Holmes remarked, as he held up the lantern and gazed about him.

"Nor from below," said Mr. Merryweather, striking his stick upon the flags which lined the floor. "Why, dear me, it sounds quite hollow," he remarked, looking up in surprise. "I must really ask you to be a little more quiet," said Holmes severely. "You have already imperilled the whole success of our expedition. Might I beg that you would have the goodness to sit down upon one of those boxes, and not to interfere?"

The solemn Mr. Merryweather perched himself upon a crate, with a very injured expression upon his face, while Holmes fell upon his knees upon the floor, and, with the lantern and a magnifying lens, began to examine minutely the cracks between the stones. A few seconds sufficed to satisfy him, for he sprang to his feet again and put his glass in his pocket.

"We have at least an hour before us," he remarked, "for they can hardly take any steps until the good pawnbroker is safely in bed. Then they will not lose a minute, for the sooner they do their work the longer time they will have for their escape. We are at present, Doctor—as no doubt you have divined—in the cellar of the city branch of one of the principal London banks. Mr. Merryweather is the Chairman of Directors, and he will explain to you that there are reasons why the more daring criminals of London should take a considerable interest in this cellar at present."

"It is our French gold," whispered the director. "We have had several warnings that an attempt might be made upon it."

"Your French gold?"

"Yes. We had occasion some months ago to strengthen our resources, and borrowed, for the purpose, 30,000 napoleons from the Bank of France. It has become known that we have never had occasion to unpack the money, and that it is still lying in our cellar. The crate upon which I sit contains 2000 napoleons packed between layers of lead foil."

"Now," observed Holmes, "it is time that we arranged our little plans. I expect that within an hour matters will come to a head. In the mean time, Mr. Merryweather, we must cover that dark lantern."

"And sit in the dark?"

"I am afraid so. And, first of all, we must choose our positions. These are daring men, and though we shall take them at a disadvantage, they may do us some harm unless we are careful. I shall stand behind this crate, and do you conceal yourselves behind those. Then, when I flash a light upon them, close in swiftly. If they fire, Watson, have no compunction about shooting them down."

I placed my revolver cocked, upon the top of the wooden case behind which I crouched. Holmes shot the slide across the front of his lantern and left us in pitch darkness—such an absolute darkness as I have never before experienced. The smell of hot metal remained to assure us that the light was still there, ready to flash out at a moment's notice. To me, with my nerves worked up to a pitch of expectancy, there was something depressing and subduing in the sudden gloom and in the cold, dank air of the vault.

"They have but one retreat," whispered Holmes. "That is back through the house into Saxe-Coburg Square. I hope that you have done what I asked you, Jones?"

"I have an inspector and two officers waiting at the front door."

"Then we have stopped all the holes. And now we must be silent and wait."

What a time it seemed! From comparing notes afterward it was but an hour and a quarter, yet it appeared to me that the night must have almost gone, and the dawn be breaking above us. My limbs were weary and stiff, for I feared to change my position; yet my nerves were worked up to the highest pitch of tension, and my hearing was so acute that I could not only hear the gentle breathing of my companions, but I could distinguish the deeper, heavier inbreath of the bulky Jones from the thin, sighing note of the bank director. From my position I could look over the case in the direction of the floor. Suddenly my eyes caught the glint of a light.

At first it was but a lurid spark upon the stone pavement. Then it lengthened out until it became a yellow line, and then, without any warning or sound, a gash seemed to open and a hand appeared—a white, almost womanly hand—which felt about in the centre of the little area of light. For a minute or more the hand, with its writhing fingers, protruded out of the floor. Then it was withdrawn as suddenly as it appeared, and all was dark again save the single lurid spark, which marked a chink between the stones.

Its disappearance, however, was but momentary. With a rending, tearing sound, one of the broad, white stones turned over upon its side, and left a square, gaping hole, through which streamed the light of a lantern. Over the edge there peeped a clean-cut, boyish face, which looked keenly about, and then, with a hand on either side of the aperture, drew itself shoulder high and waist high, until one knee rested upon the edge. In another instant he stood at the side of the hole, and was hauling after him a companion, lithe and small like himself, with a pale face and a shock of very red hair.

"It's all clear," he whispered. "Have you the chisel and the bags. Great Scott! Jump, Archie, jump, and I'll swing for it!"

Sherlock Holmes had sprung out and seized the intruder by the collar. The other dived down the hole, and I heard the sound of rending cloth as Jones clutched at his skirts. The light flashed upon the barrel of a revolver, but Holmes's hunting crop came down on the man's wrist, and the pistol clinked upon the stone floor.

"It's no use, John Clay," said Holmes blandly. "You have no chance at all."

"So I see," the other answered, with the utmost coolness. "I fancy that my pal is all right, though I see you have got his coat-tails."

"There are three men waiting for him at the door," said Holmes.

"Oh, indeed. You seem to have done the thing very completely. I must compliment you."

"You'll see your pal again presently," said Jones. "He's quicker at climbing down holes than I am. Just hold out while I fix the derbies. Now would you please march upstairs, where we can get a cab to carry you to the police station." And John Clay walked quietly off in the custody of the detective.

"Really, Mr. Holmes," said Mr. Merryweather, as we followed them from the cellar, "I do not know how the bank can thank you or repay you. There is no doubt that you have detected and defeated in the most complete manner one of the most determined attempts at bank robbery that have ever came within my experience."

"You see, Watson," Sherlock Holmes explained, in the early hours of the morning, as we sat over a glass of whiskey and soda in Baker Street, "it was perfectly obvious from the first that the only possible object of this rather fantastic business of the advertisement of the League, and the copying of the 'Encyclopædia,' must be to get this not over-bright pawnbroker out of the way for a number of hours every day. The method was no doubt suggested to Clay's ingenious mind by the color of his accomplice's hair. From the time that I heard of the assistant having come for half wages, it

was obvious to me that he had some strong motive for securing the situation."

"But how could you guess what the motive was?"

"Had there been women in the house, I should have suspected a mere vulgar intrigue. That, however, was out of the question. Then I made inquiries as to this mysterious assistant, and found that I had to deal with one of the coolest and most daring criminals in London. He was doing something in the cellar—something which took many hours a day for months on end. What could it be once more? I could think of nothing save that he was running a tunnel to some other building.

"So far I had got when we went to visit the scene of action. I surprised you by beating upon the pavement with my stick. I was ascertaining whether the cellar stretched out in front or behind. It was not in front. Then I rang the bell, and, as I hoped, the assistant answered it. We have had some skirmishes, but we had never set eyes upon each other before. I hardly looked at his face. His knees were what I wished to see. You must yourself have remarked how worn, wrinkled, and stained they were. They spoke of those hours of burrowing. The only remaining point was what were they burrowing for. I walked round the corner, saw that the City and Suburban Bank abutted on our friend's premises, and felt that I had solved my problem."

"And how could you tell that they would make their attempt to-night?" I asked.

"Well, when they closed their League offices that was a sign that they cared no longer about Mr. Jabez Wilson's presence; in other words, that they had completed their tunnel. Saturday would suit them better than any other day, as it would give them two days for their escape. For all these reasons I expected them to come to-night. When you drove home after the concert, I called upon Scotland Yard and upon the chairman of the bank directors, with the result that you have seen."

To dislodge a man from a woman's heart is a surgical operation that requires exceptional skill and pluck. These Mrs. Johnnie had, and how bravely she used her scalpel Acton Davies has related in the *Evening Sun.*

WHAT MRS. JOHNNIE DID.

"Whatever you do, don't take the 12:10," Tom had said, when at breakfast Mrs. Johnnie declared her intention of running up to town. "It's slow and awfully dusty, and there's generally a rowdy crowd aboard. Wait for the 2:05 express."

But no sooner had Tom taken his departure than Mrs. Johnnie decided to do nothing of the sort. She was a bustling little body, forever on the go, and when once an idea crept into that clever little head of hers, she was inclined to carry it through to a finish in her own particular way.

Consequently, Mrs. Johnnie did take the 12:10 local, and within five minutes' time she was wishing devoutly that she had followed Tom's advice; for it was hot and it was dusty, and they were crawling along at a snail's pace, and there were some rough-looking customers on board, and—Well, oh dear! After all, Tom did know what he was talking about occasionally.

At the far end of the car a young woman was sitting. She looked so young that one might almost have called her a child, in spite of the fact that her pretty brown hair was twisted up on the top of her head in a vain imitation of the latest fashion. And the (to Mrs. Johnnie) most atrocious fact that her cheeks were covered with rouge.

Mrs. Johnnie gathered her belongings together and set out to take possession of the seat just in front of the young girl, saying *sotto voce* to herself, meanwhile:

"It's really the most ridiculous sight I ever saw. The child must be crazy. If it were only an old woman of my age (Mrs. Johnnie was rather fond of

calling herself an old woman, although she only owned to being twenty-eight)—if it were only an old woman of my age now, there might be some excuse. But for a child like that, with the complexion of a peach; why—why—it's perfectly preposterous!"

Mrs. Johnnie settled herself comfortably in the seat, and then, half turning, she scrutinized the young girl at her leisure. She could do so without rudeness, for the girl was gazing out of the window, and her thoughts seemed to be far away. "It's a sweet little face." thought Mrs. Johnnie," and I don't care if it is painted; it's innocent and trustful. Her dress fits her abominably, but she has a glorious pair of eyes. She's a positive anomaly. I'm going to introduce myself."

The girl turned her head just at that moment, and as their eyes met, both of them smiled, and each perceived for the first time that the other wore the little silver Maltese cross of the King's Daughters. They needed no introduction after that. Mrs. Johnnie moved into the seat with her, and they were soon the best of friends. It did not take Mrs. Johnnie very long to gain the particulars of her story. She had never been to the city before, she said; indeed, except for some little excursion now and then, she had never left her home, which was in a little village on the coast of Long Island. She was so glad to have some one to talk to, for of course she was feeling a bit lonely. Then she told Mrs. Johnnie that her name was Daisy—Daisy Hope—and that she was an orphan with just one sister. Her name was Sophie, and she was married now. They had always been the very best of friends—she and Sophie—until Dan Hackett came along. Nowadays, she added, with a sigh, Sophie had eyes for no one but Dan.

"But I shan't mind it so much now," she added, suddenly brightening up again, "now that I'm going to be married, too."

"Married!" exclaimed Mrs. Johnnie in astonishment. "You don't mean to tell me so! When is it coming off and what's his name?"

"Yes; we're going to be married right away—Jack and me. This isn't very much of a trousseau, is it?" she added, with an expressive gesture toward her old-fashioned carpet-bag and two paper parcels. "But Jack said that wouldn't matter. He could fix me up when I came to town. He told me in his letter not to bring anything along; my country dresses would never do for New York, he said. So I've left them all at home there, hanging up in my closet—all except my new pink one I got at Easter. It's so pretty I couldn't bear to leave that behind. I guess it will do for the mornings, now and then. But wasn't it awfully good of Jack, though? He sent me this dress to wear on the way up, and this diamond," pointing to a huge brooch that sparkled at her throat but which Mrs. Johnnie's eyes pronounced to be very bad paste. "And there was a box of complexion salve he sent me too. I've put some of it on just to please him, but I can't say I like it very much. It itches so and feels horrid. Do all ladies paint in New York?"

At another time Mrs. Johnnie would have burst out laughing, but just at present matters were taking too serious a turn. Mrs. Johnnie was beginning to wonder very much.

"But when are you to be married, my dear?" she asked, hastily. "You haven't answered my question yet. And what does Sophie say? For, of course, you've told her all about it."

The girl hung her head, and Mrs. Johnnie could see her blushes even in spite of the rouge.

"You see, it's this way. Jack hates a fuss and all that. He said for us to get married first and then let Sophie know. That was the hardest thing I had to do—leaving her without a word of good-by. But Jack knows best, I suppose. Only I wish—"

"Excuse me, Daisy, you mustn't think me impertinent for asking all these questions, my dear. Is Jack going to meet you at the station?"

"Well, no—not exactly. He's so busy at this time of day, you know. That's one reason why he sent the

dress and things. He said in his letter that he had shown them to a lady friend of his. She's to meet me at the ferry and take charge of me till he comes."

"Oh! And how long did you say you have known a—a—Jack?"

The girl hung her head again. "I saw him first about six weeks ago. He came down on one of the yachts. He came down twice on Sunday after that, and he's written ever so often."

Mrs. Johnnie laid her hand tenderly upon the young girl's arm. "And do you really think, my dear Daisy, that you know him well enough to marry him? Wouldn't it be wiser to wait a bit and take your sister into your confidence? Why not ask Jack to wait a year for you and then see how matters stand? He'll wait for you gladly enough if he's really in earnest."

"Why should I keep him waiting," she answered. "He loves me. Isn't that enough? I love him and trust him entirely, and he does the same by me. Isn't that enough?"

Mrs. Johnnie did not answer for a moment. Her lips were pressed tightly together, for, to tell the truth, Mrs. Johnnie was making up her mind to adopt a desperate measure. This car, half full of men, was certainly no place for a scene. And Mrs. Johnnie began to realize that if she proceeded to do her duty by this little girl, a scene was bound to come. The train was just slowing up for a moment at a little wayside station.

"Well, my dear, I hope sincerely that you will find it is enough," she said. Then, springing up suddenly, she grasped the carpet-bag and her own belongings.

"Hurry up, my child!" she exclaimed, giving the girl a little push. "Here's where we change cars, you know. Come along!"

"But I thought this train—"

"Now, my dear, that's just what you mustn't do. Don't think, but follow my instructions."

Before the girl had realized what she was doing, Mrs. Johnnie had bundled her out on to the station platform. The train moved slowly out. Mrs. Johnnie watched it

disappear with a sigh of relief, and then she turned to the bewildered girl and spoke to her very gently.

"Let us walk over to the little hotel, Daisy. We shall have to wait there half an hour. Perhaps we can secure a room there, for I want to have a little talk with you."

In speaking of it afterward Mrs. Johnnie always declared that to her the walk from the station to the hotel was by far the saddest part of all that day's ordeal. It was then that the magnitude of the work she had to do dawned upon her for the first time. Before they two should be standing on that platform again, Jack, the young girl's idol, must be shattered and thrown from its pedestal. To Mrs. Johnnie fell the task of displaying him in his true colors, and though it was a task which she shrank instinctively from in perspective, when the time came Mrs. Johnnie was not found wanting. She never told any one—not even Tom—the particulars of what occurred in that little room; but when the train from New York came rushing along, half an hour later, the semaphore was hoisted as a signal to stop, and the two women stepped silently on board.

Both of them had tear-stained faces, but there was no rouge on the young girl's face now, her hair hung simply down her back, and she wore her pretty pink dress. That night, when Mrs. Johnnie reached her own home, after quite a long combat with sister Sophie, Tom was told just as many of the particulars as Mrs. Johnnie thought fit.

When she had finished he was silent for a moment or two, while he exhausted his stock of anathemas upon Jack. Then, turning his attention to the woman in the case, he exclaimed: "Well, of all the little fools—"

But Mrs. Johnnie interrupted him suddenly.

"Don't call her that, dear," she added, as she kissed him. "Just thank God that I took the 12:10."

A romance pure and simple. It is from the pen of Paul Carson, and first saw light in the *Waverly Magazine.*

AN ASSUMED NAME.

It was a hot August day. One could have borne the heat, but there had been no rain for weeks and the dust was intolerable. I leaned back in my chair and looked out of the open window. Dust—dust—clouds of it everywhere. The river danced in the sunlight a couple of blocks away, but it only served to tantalize me, for I could not reach it.

I was a telegraph operator, and nothing but illness or death would excuse me from duty until a certain number of hours had elapsed. Clatter, clatter, went the nickel-plated "sounder," and I woke from my dusty revery to realize the fact that Harlem was "calling" my office vigorously. I answered, and the telegrams began to pour in. I prided myself on my ability to put down the fastest sending without any trouble, and I was always anxious to distinguish myself when working with Harlem, because a lady manipulated the instrument at that point. But this time fate was against me. A big blue-bottle fly seemed bent on a tour of investigation over my head and face. He crawled successively into both ears, and then attempted my mouth; in desperation, I said, telegraphically, "Fly — wait." Having murdered my tormentor, I said "Go ahead!"

"What was it doing?" came tapping quickly over the wire.

"Trying to get into my mouth, ' I replied.

"Don't see how he could help it!" flashed back, and not giving me time to retort, the saucy minx began "rushing" me again, leaving me to wonder if she meant to "allude to insinuations" regarding the size of my mouth.

We had become very well acquainted, "by wire," as operators do. She had worked the Harlem wire a year,

and when business was dull we had sometimes chatted a little by electricity. We had never met, but I had an idea that she was young and pretty. I knew she was good-tempered and ladylike, because during the many "rushes" of business and the annoying incidents that take place on all wires, I had never known her to manifest the least impatience. She was always courteous and obliging, but a little sarcastic so far as I was concerned. I knew her name—Miss Allison—and she knew mine—Arthur Brent. Beyond that we knew very little of each other; but for months I had been growing more and more interested in her.

When the work slackened up a little toward night, I called the Harlem office. Operators know each other on the line by letters taken from their names, rather than the names themselves. I was known as "B" and Miss Allison as "SN."

Having received a response from Harlem, I said:

"Is it 'SN'?"

"Yes."

"As we have worked together so long, would you think it impertinent for me to write you a letter?"

"Certainly not," came back instantly. "Write as many as you please."

"If I write, will you reply?"

"Oh! that is a different thing—can't promise."

"If you won't promise to answer there's no use in my writing."

"Shall have to forego the pleasure of seeing your chirography, then, for I could not think of writing to a person I had never met."

Just then some office broke in with business, and I went home feeling decidedly snubbed.

The weeks went by; the lovely September weather replaced the torrid heat of August. There was a coolness between Miss Allison and myself. She was just as courteous as before I ventured and lost, but she did not incline to talk, and I did not trouble her. In my heart I respected her all the more, but my vanity was wounded, none the less.

One morning I sent a message to Harlem, and received "O. K. —M."

"Who's 'M?'"

"New man here — 73." "73" being interpreted means "compliments."

"Where's SN?"

"Been transferred to San Francisco; folks moved there."

I was utterly surprised, and angry, too. To be sure, we were strangers in one sense of the word, but in another sense we were old acquaintances. And to think that she had gone across the continent without even saying "good-bye!"

Do you think it strange that I should have been so interested in one whom I had never seen? Well, such was the case; but having deserted me in this manner I resolved to think no more about her. But I missed her sorely. The man who relieved her had "soured" in the business, besides being a poor operator, and often when trying to drum an obscure message into his head, or listening to his outbursts of temper, I longed for the quick wit and genial disposition of "SN."

Nearly a year passed away. Then came the terrible yellow fever scourge at New Orleans, and four lives that had stood between me and a fortune were ended, and I, only an operator in the ranks, found myself the possessor of half a million.

I resigned my position and went South in the fall to look after my property. I disliked New Orleans, and was not willing to settle there; so I sold the estate, bought a lovely place in New Jersey, invested the balance in Government bonds, and started West. I had no near relatives, but few friends, and somehow the notion clung to me that I should like to meet Miss Allison. Accordingly, one raw November morning, I presented myself at the San Francisco office and asked for work. Usually managers require references, but as I had chosen to drop my last name and be known by my middle name, Wentworth, of course I could give none. However, a certain Presidential election was

coming on, operators were very scarce, and I was given work without references; the manager knew I could easily be discharged if I did not suit.

Operating tables are usually divided by glass partitions a foot high into four compartments, thereby enabling four operators to work at one table, the glass serving to separate the sound of the instruments, which would otherwise be confusing. I was given a wire at such a table, and found myself vis-à-vis to the most beautiful girl I had ever seen. A delicate white hand with beautiful nails sent the dots and dashes flying over her wire, while a marvellous pair of gray eyes, glancing an instant through the glass, caught me staring at her. They were instantly dropped, and feeling the blood mounting to my temples, I devoted my attention to my work, which was not light, for I had been given a very fast wire in order to test my ability. At noon we ate our luncheon sitting at our tables, and during a half hour we were allowed to converse. The chief operator, sauntering down the aisle, remarked:

"Miss Allison, let me present Mr. Wentworth; as you are neighbors I hope you will be friends."

"At last! at last!" I kept saying to myself, my pulses bounding, while outwardly I was cool and polite. Having secured the long-coveted introduction, I fancied I should have plain sailing; but I was sadly mistaken. She treated me exactly as she did any of the fifty men who, with a dozen ladies, constituted the day force.

I had determined to win her love without revealing my identity, and to explain afterward. It was no easy task. I learned that her father was a civil engineer; that her mother was living; that she had a half dozen little brothers and sisters, and that they all lived in a modest house in a most respectable part of the city. Beyond this I learned but little. However, after having known Miss Allison perhaps six months, I secured her permission to call; this advantage I followed up.

I found her father and mother intelligent and refined, and the handsome piano and one or two choice

pictures in their little parlor gave evidence that they had at some time been wealthy. But as to that I did not care. Edith I knew to be beautiful, refined and good. More than this, I loved her, and should have loved her regardless of any surroundings.

There came a day at last when I determined to try my fate. It was Sunday, and we were both off duty. I had taken her to drive, and coming home in the twilight I asked her to be my wife and received a very decided refusal. I was thoroughly angry. At first she had not encouraged me, but during the last month she had certainly seemed to do so. I was quick-tempered, and I told her she was a coquette.

"You have deceived me, Miss Allison, as no true woman could have done. When you thus play with the love of an honorable man, you do something to which no true woman would stoop."

"But suppose the 'honorable man' is living under an assumed name?" she asked coolly.

I was fairly nonplussed. I had been so sure that my identity was safely hidden.

"Why do you say that?" I stammered.

"Because," looking me full in the face, "I worked the Harlem wire too long not to have learned various little mannerisms in your style of working; besides this, one day you threw an envelope, addressed to Arthur W. Brent, into the waste basket. My pencil fell into the said basket, and while searching for it I happened to see the envelope. And to cap the climax. I have had your photograph for a year or more."

"Indeed!" I asked icily. "May I ask where you got it?"

"Do you remember George Baker?"

"Yes," I replied.

George and I had once worked in Chicago together, and we had exchanged photographs.

"Well, George was my cousin. Poor boy, he is dead now; I have his album, and your picture is in it."

She leaned back in the buggy, a grave little smile on

her lips and a sparkle of mischief in her eyes, as she added:

"So you see, Mr. Wentworth, I could not possibly be your wife, as I should not wish to live under an assumed name."

I had nothing to say. What few wits I possessed has deserted me. We had reached her house; I helped her out of the buggy.

"Won't you come in?" she asked.

"No, thank you," I returned, and lifting my hat I rode away.

The next day her place at wire No. 10 was occupied by a red-headed youth. I learned that she had gone to Vera, a little seaside place, to spend her vacation.

That day I tendered my resignation, to take effect at once. The manager objected to such short notice, but I told him I must go; I could not work another day, urgent business calling me another way. So I went.

That afternoon I called on Mr. and Mrs. Allison, and told them the whole story, producing credentials and so on. My little ruse had resulted so disastrously that henceforth I determined to have everything plain and above-board.

Fortunately Mr. and Mrs. Allison were favorably impressed, and having won them over to my cause, I was seized with a sudden desire to take salt-water baths, and a day later I was in Vera.

We met—Edith and I—where everybody does—on the beach. She and her aunt were walking up and down. Miss Allison favored me with a haughty little bow, but I saw the red flame into her cheeks.

I met her in the parlor that evening, but—forewarned, forearmed. She was cold as a Polar wave. Having been snubbed by my lady twice in my life, I did not propose to run the risk again; I would be sure of my ground another time, I thought.

In her simple lawn dress Edith was more sought after that night than many an heiress in lace and satin; but, then, very few knew her real position.

I grew frantic while watching the attentions lavished

upon her, and she managed so adroitly that I could not see her one moment alone.

So a week passed; she gave me no possible chance for a private interview, and one day my temper rose to a white heat, and I left Vera, vowing never to look upon her face again. I felt certain that she had never cared for me.

There is a certain village in New Jersey which I shall call Omro. It is half surrounded by hills, and there is no prettier spot in America.

A certain wealthy speculator built a lovely mansion there. It was surrounded by lovely grounds; there were green-houses, and everything that taste and money could do had been done to make it beautiful. This place was sold at a forced sale, and I became its owner. Hither I repaired after my retreat from California. I wrote a note to Mr. and Mrs. Allison, thanking them for their uniform kindness to me.

"Miss Edith does not care for me," I wrote, "and I shall not annoy her again."

So my dream of happiness ended. I installed a widowed cousin as housekeeper in my house, and took myself out of the country. I had plenty of money and nothing to do. I scorned to give myself up to dissipation of any sort, so I travelled, ever seeking a face that should drive Edith's from my memory, and never finding it.

After nearly three years had elapsed I found myself travelling westward over the Union Pacific. Some mining speculations called me to Colorado. I had outgrown the bitterness, the anger, of those first days, but I had not forgotten. I sat thinking it all over as the train swept along. It was a very dark night, and the rain beat against the car windows in sheets.

Suddenly there was a terrific crash, that sickening sensation of falling, an instant of terrible pain, and then—blank unconsciousness.

The first thing that attracted my returning senses was the click of a telegraph instrument. I thought I was dreaming of old times. I opened my eyes and

looked into those of Edith Allison—older, graver, but Edith unmistakably.

"My darling—my darling!" I said.

"Oh, Arthur, my love, do you know me?"

I tried to put my right arm around her, but it was helpless.

"Do you love me now, dearest?" I whispered.

"I love you," she answered.

"Kiss me, then."

She blushed to her temples, but she laid her sweet lips on mine—and so we were betrothed.

Explanations came after. She was agent and operator at the little station at the end of the bridge through which our train had dropped. I, with others of the wounded, was brought into the depot, and Edith recognized me at once, and had me carried into her office.

She discovered that she loved me after I left Vera, and a delayed letter from her mother, received soon after, explained everything. She felt that she had judged harshly; I knew I had been hasty, so the forgiveness was mutual.

Mr. Allison had given up civil engineering, moved to this little station on the Union Pacific, and gone to raising stock; so it happened that Edith was operator there, that she might be at home.

I was carried to his house, and the care of his wife and daughter was unremitting until my cut head and broken arm were well. After my recovery I went on to Colorado, attended to my affairs, and returned in time to attend a quiet little wedding in September at Mr. Allison's house, in which Edith and I were the chief actors. I telegraphed my cousin to have everything in readiness, and I took my wife straight to her new home.

To-day she is the leader of the strictly select society in the aristocratic little village I have mentioned; and not one of the ladies who copy her dresses know that she was "only an operator," or that she and her husband were first acquainted "by wire." If they did, no one would care.

There is no loneliness like that in a great city. Possible friends throng about you from every side, and yet you have not even a speaking acquaintance with them. It may be that there is a touch of self-reproach in the thought—at any rate the "crowded loneliness" of the old man who lives in Guy de Maupassant's sketch was more than he could bear.

A PICTURE OF FRENCH LIFE.

When Le Père Leras, book-keeper with MM. Labuze & Co., came out of their place of business, he remained for some seconds dazzled by the splendor of the setting sun. He had worked all day under the yellow light of the gas jet at the further end of the back shop, opening on the narrow court and deep as a pit. The little room in which for forty years past he had spent his days was so dark that even at noon of a summer day it was with difficulty that one could get along without gaslight.

It was always damp and cold there; and the emanations from a sort of ditch on which the window opened entered into the dark room, filling it with a musty odor and with the stench of a sewer.

M. Leras, for forty years past, had come into this prison every morning at eight o'clock, and remained there till seven o'clock in the evening, bent over his books, working with the untiring diligence of an excellent clerk.

He earned now three thousand francs a year, having begun at fifteen hundred francs. He had remained a bachelor, his means not permitting him to take a wife. And having never had much pleasure, he desired little. From time to time, however, weary of his monotonous and continuous work, he expressed a platonic wish: If I had an income of five thousand francs, I should let myself slip along easily."

He had never slipped along easily, however, having never possessed a sou beyond his monthly salary.

His life had passed away without incident, without

emotion, and almost without hope. The faculty of dreaming which each one has within him had never been developed in the mediocrity of his ambitions.

At twenty-one years of age he had gone to MM. Labuze & Co. And he had never left there.

In 1856 he had lost his father, then his mother in 1859. And since then nothing had happened but a removal in 1868, his landlord having wished to increase his rent.

Every day at six o'clock precisely his alarm clock with its frightful noise made him leap from his bed.

Twice, however, the mechanism had got out of order, in 1866 and 1874, without his ever knowing the reason of it. He dressed himself, made his bed, swept his room, dusted his armchair and the top of the commode. All these tasks required an hour and a half.

Then he went out, bought a roll at the bakery Lahure, where he had known eleven different proprietors without changing its name, and he started to his business eating his roll.

His entire existence had thus been spent in the narrow, dark office covered with the same wall paper. He had entered there young, as assistant to M. Bruement, and with the desire of succeeding him.

He had succeeded him, and expected nothing further.

All the harvest of memories which other men collect in the course of their life, the unforeseen events, love affairs, fortunate or tragic, adventurous voyages, all the chances of a free existence remained unknown to him.

The days, the weeks, the months, the seasons, the years, were alike. At the same hour each day he arose, went out to breakfast, reached his office, went away, dined and went to sleep, without any interruption to the regular monotony of the same act, the same incidents, and the same thoughts.

Formerly he had looked at his yellow mustache and his curly hair in the little round glass left by his predecessor. He now looked, each evening before leaving, at his white mustache and his bald forehead in the same glass. Forty years had passed away, tedious and

rapid, empty as a day of sadness, and like the hours of a restless night; forty years of which nothing remained, not a souvenir, not even a misfortune, since the death of his parents. Nothing.

On this day M. Leras stood at the street entrance, dazzled by the splendor of the setting sun; and instead of going home again it occurred to him to take a little turn before dinner, a thing which he did four or five times a year.

He reached the boulevards where a stream of people was flowing along under the trees growing green again. It was a spring evening, one of those first warm soft evenings which thrill the heart with an intoxication of life.

M. Leras went along with the hobbling step of an old man, but with cheerfulness in his eye, made happy by the tepid air and by the universal joy about him.

He reached the Champs Elysees and continued to walk, revived by the effluvia of youth which passed in the breezes.

The whole sky was blazing, and the Arc de Triomphe defined its dark mass upon the glittering background of the horizon, like a giant standing in a fire. When he had almost reached the huge monument the old book-keeper felt that he was hungry and he went into a wine merchant's for dinner.

They served him before the shop, on the pavement, a sheep's foot with chicken, a salad and some asparagus; and M. Leras ate a good dinner, the best that he had had for a long time. He moistened his cheese with half a bottle of fine Bordeaux; then he drank a cup of coffee, which he rarely did, and afterward a small glass of champagne brandy.

When he had paid he felt very jolly, very brisk, a little befogged even. And he said to himself: "This is a fine evening. I shall continue my walk to the entrance of the Bois de Boulogne. It will do me good."

He started out again. An old air that one of his neighbors had formerly sung came persistently into his head. He hummed it; taking it up repeatedly.

Night came down upon Paris, a night without wind, a seething night. M. Leras followed the avenue of the Bois de Boulogne and watched the carriages pass by. They came with their glittering eyes, one behind the other, allowing a second's glimpse of a couple within, the woman in a light dress, the man clad in black.

It seemed to M. Leras to be a long procession of lovers, moving under the starry, burning sky. They passed and passed, sitting one beside the other in their carriages, dumb, lost in hallucination, in emotion, in intoxication of each other's presence. The warm darkness seemed full of kisses which floated and undulated about. A sensation of tenderness made the air languid, rendered it stifling. All these people close together, all these people intoxicated with the same wish, with the same thought, spread a fever about them. All these carriages full of caresses shed on their passage a subtle and disturbing emanation.

M. Leras, a little weary at last of walking, seated himself on a bench to watch these fiacres laden with lovers pass by. And almost immediately a couple came and sat down near him. He rose and went on, his mind troubled, his heart oppressed. Other men and women passed and repassed near him. It seemed to him that something black extended itself over his head, something heartrending.

And he again seated himself. The carriages rolled on continually.

"It would have been better not to come here," thought he, "everything here upsets me."

There are persons, truly, who have opportunities. And suddenly, as if a thick veil had been torn away, he perceived the misery, the infinite monotonous misery, of existence; the past misery, the present misery, the future misery; the last days like the first, with nothing before him, nothing behind him, nothing about him, nothing in his heart, nothing anywhere.

The procession of carriages went on continually. He continually saw appear and disappear in the rapid passage of the uncovered fiacres the two silent and enrap-

tured beings. It seemed to him that all humanity was passing before him, intoxicated with joy, pleasure, with happiness. And he was alone looking at it, alone, altogether alone. He would be alone again to-morrow, always alone, alone as no one is alone.

What was he expecting? What was he hoping? Nothing. He thought that it must be pleasant when one is old to find on returning home little children who prattle. To grow old is delightful when surrounded by beings who owe you life, who love you, caress you, say charming simple things to you, who warm your heart again and console you for everything.

After thinking of his empty room, of his little room, clean and dreary, which no one ever entered but himself, a sensation of distress pressed upon his soul. This room appeared to him still more pitiful than his little office.

No one came there, no one ever spoke there; it was dead, dumb, without the echo of a human voice. Walls seem to absorb something of the people who live within them, something of their manner, of their faces, of their words. The houses lived in by happy families are gayer than the dwellings of the wretched. His room was as empty as his life. And the thought of entering it alone, of sleeping in his bed, of beginning again all his movements, all his tasks of each evening, terrified him. And as if to separate himself further from the moment when he must return to it, he entered into a thicket to seat himself on the grass. * *

He heard about him, above him, everywhere, a confused murmur, vast, continuous, made up of innumerable and dissimilar sounds; a deep reverberation, near, yet distant; a vague and prodigious palpitation of life; the respiration of Paris, breathing like a colossal being.

* * * * * * *

The sun, already high, shed a flood of light on the Bois de Boulogne. Some carriages began to move about and the gay throngs of horsemen to pass by.

A couple were walking in a deserted alley. Suddenly

the young woman, raising her eyes, perceived in the branches something brown; she raised her hand, astonished, anxious.

"Look! * * what is it?"

Then uttering a cry, she fell into the arms of her companion, who laid her on the ground.

The keepers, who were at once called, took down an old man, hung by means of his suspenders.

They reported that the death dated from the evening before. The papers found on him showed that he was the book-keeper of MM. Labuze & Co., and that his name was Leras.

They attributed the death to suicide, the cause of which was unknown. Perhaps a sudden attack of insanity.

That which makes life so wonderfully absorbing is that we never know when comedy and tragedy may be at our elbow. The tragedy of Heera Nund, which F. A. Steel has told in *Macmillan's Magazine*, took place among the melons and tomatoes in a truck garden in India.

HEERA NUND.

He stood in the veranda, salaaming with both hands, in each of which he held a bouquet—round-topped, compressed, prim little posies, with fat bundles of stalk bound spirally with date-fibre; altogether more like ninepins than bouquets, for the time of flowers was not yet, and only a few ill-conditioned rosebuds, suggestive of worms, and a dejected *champak* or two showed amongst the green.

The holder was hardly more decorative than the posies. Bandy, hairy brown legs, with toes set wide open by big brass rings,—a sight bringing discomfort within one's own slippers from sheer sympathy; a squat body, tightly buttoned into a sleeveless white coat; a face of mild ugliness overshadowed by an immaculately white turban. From the coral and gold necklace round his thick throat, and the crescent-shaped earrings in his spreading ears I guessed him to be of the Arain caste. He was, in fact, Heera Nund, gardener to my new landlord; therefore, for the present, my servant. Had I inquired into the matter, I should probably have found that his forbears had cultivated the surrounding land for centuries; certainly long years before masterful men from the West had jotted down their trivial boundary pillars to divide light from darkness, the black man from the white, cantonments from the rest of God's earth. One of these little white pillars stood in a corner of my garden, and beyond it lay an illimitable stretch of bare brown plain, waiting till the young wheat came to clothe its nakedness.

I did not inquire, however; few people do in India.

Perhaps they are intimidated by the extreme antiquity of all things, and dread letting loose the floodgates of garrulous memory. Be that as it may I was content to accept the fact that Heera Nund, whether representing ancestral proprietors or not, had come to congratulate me, a stranger, on having taken, not only the house, but the garden also. The *Sahibs*, he said, went home so often nowadays that they had ceased to care for gardens. This one, having been in a contractor's hands for years, had become, as it were, a miserable low-degree native place. In fact he had found it necessary to steep his own knowledge in oblivion in order that content should grow side by side with country vegetables. Yet he had not forgotten the golden age, when under the ægis of some judge with a mysterious name he, too, Heera Nund the Arain, had raised celery and beet-root, French peas and artichokes, asparagus and petercelli. He reeled off the English names with a glibness and inaccuracy in which, somehow, there lurked a pathetic dignity. Then, suddenly, from behind a favoring pillar, he sprung upon me the usual native offering, consisting of a flat basket decorated with a few coarse vegetables. A bunch of rank-smelling turnips, half-a-dozen blue radishes running two to the pound, various heaps of native greens, a bit of an overblown cauliflower, proclaiming its bazaar origin by the turmeric powder adhering to it in patches, a leaf-cup of mint ornamented by two glowing chillies. He laid the whole at my feet with a profound obeisance. "This dust-like offering," he said, gravely, "is all that the good God (*khoda*) can give to the *sahib*. Let the Presence (*huzoor*) wait a few months and see what Heera Nund can do for him."

I shall not soon forget the ludicrous solemnity of voice and gesture, or the simple self-importance overlaying the ugly face with the smile of a cat licking cream.

I did not see him again for some days, for accession to a new office curtails leisure. When however, I found time for a stroll round my new domain, I discovered

Heera Nund hard at work. His coatee hung on a bush; his bare brown back glistened in the sunshine as he stooped down to deepen a water-course with his adze-like shovel. A brake of sugar-cane, red-brown and gold, showed where the garden proper merged into the peasants' land beyond; for the well whence the water came that flowed round Heera Nund's hidden feet, as he stood in the runnel, irrigated quite a large stretch of the fields around my holding. The well-wheel creaked in recurring discords, every now and again giving out a note or two as if it were going to begin a tune. The red evening sun shone through the mango trees, where the green parrots hung like unripe fruit. The bullocks circled round and round; the water dripped and gurgled.

"How about the seeds I sent you?" I asked, when Heera Nund drew his wet feet from the stream, and composing himself for the effort, produced an elaborate salaam.

He left humility behind him as he stalked over to a narrow strip of ground on the other side of the well, a long strip portioned out into squares and circles like a doll's garden, with tiny one-span walks between.

"Behold!" he said. "His Honor will observe that the cabbage caste have life already."

Truly enough, the half-covered seeds showed gussets of white in their brown jackets. "But where are the tickets? I sent word specially that you were to be sure and stick the labels on each bed. How am I to know which is which?"

"The Presence can see that the sticks are there," he answered with a superior smile, "but there are others beside the *sahibs* who love tickets."

He pointed to the tree above us where, on a branch, sat a peculiarly bushy-tailed squirrel, as happy as a king over the brussel-sprouts' wrapper which he was crumpling into a ball with deft hands and sharp teeth. How I came to know it was this particular wrapper happened thus: I threw my cap at the offender, and in his flight he dropped the paper on my bald head; it was hard, and had points.

"They are mis-begotten devils," remarked Heera, cheerfully; "but they are building nests, *sahib*, and like to paper the inside. Notwithstanding, the Presence need fear no confusion; his slave has many names in his head. This is *arly walkrin* (early Walcherin), that is *droomade* (drumhead), yonder is *dookoyark* (Duke of York), and that, that, and that——" He would have gone on interminably, had I not changed the subject by asking what was growing beneath a dilapidated hand-light, which stood next to a sturdy crop of broadcast radishes. Only a few panes of glass remained intact, but the vacancies had been neatly supplied by coarse muslin. The gardener's face, always simple in expression, became quite homogeneous with pure content.

"*Huzoor!* It is the *malin* (female gardener)!"

"The *malin*? What on earth do you mean?"

Have you ever watched the face of a general servant when she takes the covers off the Christmas dinner? Have you ever seen a very young conjurer lift his father's hat to show you that the handkerchief (which he has palpably secreted elsewhere) is no longer in its legitimate hiding-place? Something of that mingled triumph and fear, lest some accident may have befallen skill in the interim, showed itself in Heera Nund's countenance as he removed the light with a flourish, thus disclosing to view a fat and remarkably black baby, asleep on a bed of leaves. It was attired in a pair of silver bangles, and a Maw's feeding-bottle grew, like some new kind of root-crop, from the ground beside it.

"My daughter, *Huzoor*—little Dhropadi the *malin*."

His voice thrilled even my bachelor ears as he squatted down and began mechanically to fan the swift-gathering flies from the sleeping child.

"You seem to be very fond of her," I remarked after a pause. "It is only a girl after all. Have you no son?"

He shook his head.

"She is the only one, and I waited for her ten years. Ten long years; so I was glad even to get a *malin*. Dhropadi grows as fast as a boy; almost as fast as the

Huzoor's cabbages. Only the other day she was no bigger than my hand."

"Your wife is dead, I suppose?" The question was perhaps, a little brutal; but it was so unusual to see a man doing dry-nurse to a baby girl, that I took it for granted the mother had died months before, at the child's birth. I never saw a face change more rapidly than his; the simplicity left it, and in place thereof came a curious anxiety such as a child might show, with the dawning conviction that it has lost itself.

"She is not at all dead, *Huzoor;* on the contrary she is very young. Children cry sometimes, and my house does not like crying. You see, when people are young they require more sleep; when she is old, as I am, she will be able to keep awake."

His tone was argumentative, as if he were reasoning the matter out for his own edification. "Not that Dhropadi keeps me awake often," he added, in hasty apology to that infant's reputation; "considering how a young a person she is, her ways are very straight-walking and meek."

"If she cries you can always stop her with the watering-pot, I suppose."

He looked shocked at the suggestion.

"*Huzoor!* it is not difficult to stop them; such a very little thing pleases a baby. Sometimes it is the sunshine—sometimes it is the wind in the trees—sometimes it is the birds or the squirrels, or the flowers. When it is tired of these there is always the milk in its stomach. Dhropadi's goat is yonder; it lives on your Honor's weeds. You are her father and her mother."

However much I might repudiate the relationship, I soon became quite accustomed to finding Dhropadi in the most unexpected places in my garden. For soon after my first introduction to her, the claims of an early crop of lettuces to protection from the squirrels led Heera Nund to transfer the hand-light from one of his charges to another. Dhropadi, he said, could grow nicely without it now; the black ants could not carry her off, and the squirrels had quite begun to recognize

that she was of the race of Adam. At first, however, he took precautions against mistakes, and many a time I have seen the sleeping child stuck round with pea-sticks, or decorated with fluttering feathers on a string, to scare away the birds. Sometimes she was blanching with the celery, and once I nearly trod on her as she lay among the toppings in a thick plantation of blossoming beans. But she never came to harm; the only misadventure being when her father would lay her to sleep in some dry water-channel, and, forgetting which one it was, turn the shallow stream that way. Then there would be a momentary outcry at the cold bath; but the next she would be pacified with a flower, and sit in the sun to dry, for, to say sooth, no more good-tempered child ever existed than Dhropadi. In this, at any rate, she was like her father, though I could trace no resemblance in other ways. "She is like my house," he would say, when I noticed the fact. "She is young and I am old—quite old."

Indeed, as time passed, I saw that Heera Nund was older than I thought at first. Before the barber came in the morning there was quite a silver stubble on his bronze cheek, and his bright restless eyes were haggard and anxious. Despite his almost comic jauntiness and self-importance he struck me as having a hunted look at times, especially when he came out from the mud-walled enclosure at the further end of the garden, where his "house" lived. He went there but seldom, spending his days in tending Dhropadi and his plants with an almost extravagant devotion. His state of mind when that young lady used her new accomplishment of crawling, to the detriment of a bed of *sootullians* (Sweet Williams) in which he took special pride, was quite pathetic. I found him simply howling, between regret for the plants, and fear lest I should order punishment to the offender. His gratitude when I laughed was simply unbounded. After this Dhropadi used to be set in a twelve-inch pot, half sunk in the ground, where she would stay contentedly for hours, drumming the sides with a carrot, while Heera weeded and dibbled.

"She grows," he would say, snatching her up fiercely in his arms, "she grows as all my plants grow. See my *sootullians!* They will blossom soon and then all the *sahibs* will come and say, 'See the *sootullians* which Heera Nund and Dhropadi have grown for the *Huzoor.*'"

Yet with all this blazoning of content the man was curiously restless; almost like a child in his desire for action and vivid interest in trivialties. "See the misbegotten creature I have found eating the honorable *Huzoor's* roots!" he would say, casting a wire-worm on the veranda steps, and dancing on it vindictively. "It was in the *Huzoor's* carnations, but by the blessing of God and Heera Nund's vigilance, it is dead. Nothing escapes me. Have I not fought wire-worms since the beginning of all things, I and my fathers? We kill all creeping, crawling things, except the holy snake that brings fruit and blossom to the garden."

One night I was disturbed by unseemly noises, coming apparently from the servants' quarters; but my remonstrances next morning were met, by my bearer, with swift denial. "It is Heera. He, poor man, has to beat his wife almost every night now. I wonder the Presence has not heard her before; she screams very loud."

I stood aghast.

"He should let her go or kill her," continued the bearer placidly. "She is not worth the trouble of beating; but he is a fool, because she is Dhropadi's mother. Yes, he is a fool; he beats her when he finds her lover there. He should beat her well before the man comes. That is the best way with women."

It was an old story, it seemed, dating before Dhropadi's appearance on the scene. It occurred to me that perhaps a deeper tragedy than I had thought for was ripening in my garden. Among the ripening plants I found myself watching Dhropadi and her father with an almost morbid interest, and hoping that if my idle suspicion was right, kindly fate might hide the truth away forever, in the bottom of that well where Heera often held the child to smile at her own reflection, far down where the water showed like a huge round dewdrop.

So time went on, until the *sootullians* showed blossom buds and Dhropadi cut her first tooth on one and the same day. Perhaps the excitement of the double event was too much for Heera's nerves; perhaps what happened was due anyhow; but as I strolled through the garden that evening at sundown I saw the most comically pathetic sight my eyes ever beheld. Heera Nund clothed, but not in his right mind, was dancing a *cancan* among his *sootullians*, while Dhropadi shrieked with delight and beat frantically on her flower-pot. Even with the knowledge of all that came after, the remembrance provokes a smile. The rhythmic bobbing up and down of the uncouth figure, the cow-like kicks of the bandy legs, the preternaturally grave face above the crushed *sootullians* below.

I sent him in charge of two sepoys to the Dispensary, and there he remained for two months, more or less. When he came back he was very quiet, very thin, and there were the marks of several blisters on the back of his head. He resumed work cheerfully with many apologies for having been ill, and once more he and Dhropadi—who had been handed over, meantime, under police supervision, to her mother—were to be found spending their days together in amicable companionship, his only regrets being apparently that the *sootullians* had blossomed and Dhropadi learnt to walk in his absence.

But for one or two little eccentricities I might have been tempted to forget that *cancan* among the flowers; indeed I always met his inquiries as to the *sootullians* with the remark that they had done as well as could be expected, in the circumstances. The eccentricities, however, if few, were striking. One was his exaggerated gratitude for the blisters on the back of his head; the last thing in the world one would have thought likely to produce an outbreak of that Christian virtue.

But it did, and an allusion to the all-too-visible scars invariably crowned the frequent recital of the benefits he had received at my hands. Another was the difficulty he had in distinguishing Dhropadi from the other fruits of his labors. On two separate occasions she

formed part of the daily basket of vegetables which he brought in to me, and very quaint the little black morsel looked sitting surrounded by tomatoes and melons. But though he treated the matter as an elaborate joke when I remarked on it, there was a dazed, uncertain look in his eyes as if he were not quite sure as to the right end of the stick.

Nevertheless peace and contentment reigned apparently in his house. When I sat out in the dark, hot evenings, a glow of flickering firelight from within showed the mysterious mud-walled enclosure by the wall, decorous and conventional. The winking stars looking down into it knew more of the life within than I did, but at any rate no unseemly cries disturbed the scented night air and the *Huzoor's* slumbers. Perhaps the police supervision had impressed the lover with the dangers of lurking house-trespass by night; perhaps the dark-browed, heavy-jowled young woman who had taken my warning so sullenly had learnt more craft; perhaps the languor which creeps over all things in May had sucked the vigor even from passion. Who could say? Those crumbling mud walls hid it all, and Heera seemed to have begun a new life with the hot-weather vegetables.

So matters stood when an old enemy laid hold of me. Ten days after I found myself racing Death with a determination to reach the sea, and feel the salt west wind on my face before he and I closed with each other. The strange hurry and eagerness of it all comes back to some of us like a nightmare, years after the exile is over. The doctor's verdict, the swift packing of a trunk or two, the hope, the fear, the mad longing at least to see the dear faces once more.

They packed me and a half a hundred pillows into a *palki ghari* one afternoon. The servants stood, white clad, in a row beside the white pillars, dazzling in the slanting sunlight. I drove through the flower garden dusty and scorched. At the gate stood Heera Nund, one arm occupied by Dhropadi, the other supporting a huge basket of vegetables. He looked uncertain which

to present; finally seeing the carriage drive on, he deliberately let the basket fall, and running to my side, thrust the child's chubby hands forward. They held just such ninepin bouquets as he had carried on our first introduction. "Take them, *sahib!*" he cried. "Take them for luck! and come back soon to the *mali* and the *malin.*" As the *ghari* turned sharp down the road I saw him standing amidst the ruins of the basket, with Dhropadi in his arms.

Six months passed before I set foot on Indian soil again; and then fate, and a restless Government, sent me to a new station. When my servants arrived with my baggage from the old one, I naturally fell to asking questions. "And how is Heera Nund?" was one. My bearer smiled benignly. "*Huzoor*, he is well,—in the month of July he was hanged."

"Bearer!"

"Without doubt; it was in the month of July. He killed his wife with an axe."

Dhropadi was bitten by a snake, while she slept one day, when Heera had to leave her with her mother; and that night he killed his wife as *she* slept also. It was a mistake to be so revengeful, for every one knew Dhropadi was not really his daughter."

"Do you think that Heera knew?"

"She told him when the child died in order to stop his grief; but it did not. She was very kind to him,—after the other one went to prison for lurking about."

"And did no one tell about it all?"

"About what, *Huzoor?*"

"About the vegetables, and Dhropadi, and the *sootullians*, and the blisters on the back of his head! Did no one say the man was mad?"

"There was a new assistant at the Dispensary, *sahib*, and her people were very rich; besides, Heera was not mad at all. He did it on purpose. He was a bad man, and the Sirkar did right to hang him—in July."

But as I turned away I could think of nothing but that *cancan* among the *sootullians*, with little Dhropadi beating time with a carrot.

ROMANCE begins with a story told by a doctor; so it shall end. Doctors' stories have their own distinct mark; they are either grotesque or horrible. The first was grotesque, this last is certainly horrible. It is from the French of Jules Lermina, and was translated for ROMANCE by H. B.

IN THE TOMB.

I.

"THERE are no more real duels," said one; "a scratch is given—three drops of blood, and everybody goes to breakfast."

"Besides," returned the other, "things are always arranged so that no one can be killed; either the seconds strike up the swords and prevent hard blows, or pistols are used, and they charge them with cork bullets."

"Duelling, as it is practiced to-day, is a farce."

"Say a caricature."

Dr. Gariel, who, up to this time, had listened without taking part in the conversation—which astonished no one, for he was not talkative—now raised his head and murmured:—

"You think so?"

"For my own part," answered the first speaker, "I have several times acted as witness, and, in truth, I consider that I have taken part in a genuine farce, at which only the galleries were frightened."

"I agree with you," replied the other. "But I do not complain, for I confess I should have been greatly embarrassed had I had a corpse left on my hands. A dead man can never be made to disappear; the authorities always find him."

Once more the doctor said:—

"You think so?"

"Will you deny, Doctor, that it would be impossible to distract the attention of the police from a dead body? *Sapristi!* it is very quickly known if a man disappears,

especially if he occupies any position at all in society. There is always some one who is concerned about his absence. Now if you speak of some vagabond without friends, without family, without home—"

"I can tell you—" this time the doctor spoke very clearly—"that there are very serious duels; that a man may be killed, and furthermore, although belonging to an excellent family, having friends connected even with the authorities, he may disappear forever, without any one knowing what has become of him."

"But the body is somewhere."

"Certainly."

"We can see, Doctor, by your face, that you have a story to tell us; do not keep us waiting as if you were a mere romancer. The story! the story!"

The doctor passed his hand over his forehead, and said:—

"Listen, then."

We lit our cigars and installed ourselves comfortably to listen.

Let it be said beforehand that we were absolutely skeptical, and that among ourselves we defied the most skilful story-teller to move us.

The doctor, very calm in appearance and a trifle pale, seemed not to remark our slightly ironical smiles.

II.

"Here it is," he began. "How long ago? I do not remember exactly, but it was a long time—a long time—twenty-five or thirty years. Where did it take place? Among the savages of Nyanza? Among the Redskins? No, right here in France. I will not tell you the name of the little town. Look it out on the map of France. The town is near a medical college. It is surrounded by important villages, one of which bears the name of a battle—sadly celebrated.

"Enough of that; here are the facts:

"In the little town in question, two students of the same age, brothers in friendship, worked assiduously, impatient to acquire that title of physician which in the

distance seemed to carry with it a certainty of rapid fortune.

"They had besides more honorable desires than that of creating for themselves a lucrative *clientéle.* They were laborious, impassioned men, who dreamed of wonderful discoveries, and exerted themselves, in intelligently conducted researches, for the purpose of conquering some of the ills which burdened humanity. Not at all rivals, nor jealous of each other. On the contrary, they combined their intelligence, their energies, their hopes, and each of them was ready to share with the other the glory he hoped to attain.

"They were, you see, two children.

"The last year of their studies was drawing to a close; their examinations had been brilliant, and only a slight effort was requred to enable them to reach their goal; that is to say, for the acquirement of a diploma which should permit them to work without restraint, in spite of professors wedded to routine, and often ill-natured.

"I repeat, they were two friends.

"How did it happen that this friendship was one day turned to hatred? How, from being firm allies, did they become implacable enemies? A profound moralist has said, '*Cherchez la femme.*'

"This time as always, you would have found her.

"Who was she? Was she worthy the furious rivalry that, on her account, had separated these two brothers? What matters it? A woman, to those who love her, is always the most wonderful of her sex. And they both loved her to such a degree as to threaten the loss of their reason.

"In fact they did lose it, for they must have been mad to—"

III.

The doctor paused a moment, drank a mouthful from his glass, then resumed, steadying his voice, whose tones, for a moment, had been singularly faint.

"A furious hatred took the place of their friendship;

but, by a sort of tacit agreement, they resolutely concealed it from the eyes of others. They were seen together as before; together they buried themselves in the laboratory; they were found together at the clinic.

"One day they addressed themselves to four of their comrades, students like themselves, and explained themselves thus: They hated each other mortally; it was not necessary to disclose the cause of this antipathy which had sprung up between them, like an incurable madness; the world was not large enough for both; they were resolved upon a mortal combat.

"Do not imagine that the four students made any objection. For a long time romanticism, which had been driven out of Paris by skepticism, had taken refuge in the provinces. They still believed there in the heroes of George Sand, in the truculence of Gautier in the Thirteen of Balzac. A duel to the death! It was a rare windfall.

"However, among these hair-brained fellows, one, more reasonable or more egotistical than the rest, observed that the seconds in so serious a duel might well be uneasy. Indeed, at that moment, it seemed that the authorities were in the vein to prosecute duellists, a thing that happens intermittently, as you know.

"Fearing these objections on the part of the witnesses, our two duellists had provided for them. They would fight in a place that should defy all curiosity; furthermore, as the body of him who should fall—there was no doubt that one would fall—might disappear without the attention of the authorities being attracted, this is how matters were arranged.

"One summer night, towards two in the morning, the six young men left the little town without any one's noticing their departure. The seconds carried something concealed in their cloaks. It was not the swords.

"They chose paths in the vicinity where they were sure of meeting no one, and so reached the little village of ——.

"They found themselves just under the walls of a

cemetery. They were all young and agile. It was not difficult to scale the walls. They were soon inside the cemetery.

"The spectacle was certainly romantic! In the first glimmering light of day the white tombs emerged from the morning mists like spectres with their arms extended under their winding-sheets; the wooden crosses showing black among them.

"They chose a narrow place where no burial would be likely to take place for a long time; that could easily be guessed by the topography of the alleys before traced. When they had fixed upon the spot the four witnesses took from under their cloaks the spades which they had kept concealed there, and began to dig a grave.

"They had vigorous arms; they were sons of peasants and knew how to use their tools. After twenty minutes of work, a trench six feet long and three in width yawned before them.

"'Is that enough?' demanded one of the witnesses.

"The two adversaries, who, until then, had been walking about among the tombs, taking great care not to meet, approached and answered affirmatively

"'You are still determined to fight?'

"'Yes.'

"'Until one of you falls?'

"'Yes.'

"'There can be no attempt at reconciliation?'

"Each of the two enemies placed in the hands of his seconds a letter which should not be opened until after the death of one of them. The witnesses accepted the papers.

"The two men then stripped to the waist; there must remain no blood-stained garments. Then they gave each of them a knife.

"They leaped into the open grave.

"How they hurled themselves upon each other, how they clung to each other, how, mad, blind with rage, they struck, no one knows; for they did not know themselves in that access of mad fury.

"Suddenly one of them said, with a rattling in his voice:

"'He is dead.'

"He—that was the other.

"The witnesses, stupified with horror but restrained by self-conceit—it was the fashion then to play at impassibility—could scarcely assist him out of the tomb, they were trembling so.

"He was the victor, he was living; the other lay cut in two, in the midst of a sea of blood.

"He must disappear. One of the students verified his death. Then they filled up the grave, stamped it down, and replaced the tufts of grass that they had carefully removed.

"They returned to the town.

"The following day the parents of the dead man received a letter in which he announced that having been possessed for a long time of a desire to see the world, he was about to depart for a neighboring port and should embark for some destination which he would make known to them by letter only when he should arrive.

"That letter never came.

"The man had disappeared, and no one knew what had become of him."

IV.

The auditors of this sinister story were livid.

"But the other," cried some one.

"The other, the survivor," said the doctor, in a grave voice—"I am he."

"And the woman?"

"Was a worthless creature; I have never seen her since."

ROMANCE

BEING

The Tales of the New York Story Club

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When this story was read at the club, one member remarked, "Faulkner ought to have learned never to monkey with a buzz-saw." There is no mention of a buzz-saw in the story. Whether there is any pertinence in this comment, the reader must determine for himself. It is republished from *Cornhill*.

A PAIR OF EARS.

I.

"MR. FAULKNER, I have news for you," said the Iviza vice-consul, entering the room in which the other was seated at a table over some brandy-and-water and an ancient periodical.

"News! I wonder how you get at it in this den of a place. Is it that Don John's hen has given birth to a double-yolked egg, or what?"

"Now, really, sir, I'm in earnest. Listen. It was only a half-hour ago that I was with his illustriousness the Bishop, who, you know, lives for the present in the high part of the town, where one can see towards Formentera. We were regarding the water when, lo! a noble yacht of the English kind passed through the sound, and seemed to drop her anchor within a mile of the rocks. Then she let off a little boat, and one, two, three, four people descend into her—two ladies, and two mariners, in blue and white. Well, sir, I was surprised. But I forget all about it in a little while, until I meet the lieutenant, who run towards me near the drawbridge and say I be needed. 'There is,' said he, 'an English lady of distinguished birth on the Marina, and she is inflamed with Don John because of the dirtiness of his rooms. She demands the English consul, and I entreat you to go and see her!' Hearing this, I am agitated, Mr. Faulkner, for Iviza does not receive many visitors of rank. But I make all speed and arrive in time to console Don John. The man had—really he had—told her ladyship she might go on her knees to him for a bed, and even then he would not give it her. You know what a

man he is, an *hidalgo* to the toe-nails! But I made that all right, and for the present there will be peace. And now, sir, you being an Englishman, you will come to make her ladyship's acquaintance, will you not?"

Mr. Faulkner had been much interested in this story. Towards the close of it he had glanced at himself in the mirror and straightened his back and curled his moustaches. The reflection seemed to please him.

"Well, 'tis a rum go!" he exclaimed. "What's her name?"

"She is the Countess of Squirm—her ladyship's maid informed me—and what you would call an 'original,' I imagine."

"Oh, really! Of course, one knows the Earl of Squirm as well as one's a, b, c. Then, I take it, she isn't in her first youth, Señor Marianas?"

"Well, no, sir. She is gray, but so sprightly, and yet quite the aristocrat. I beg of you to share the responsibility of her with me!"

"With all the pleasure in life, Señor Marianas. I will wash my hands, and then I will be with you."

Mr. Faulkner was a dark-horse sort of man of about five-and-thirty. He had come to Iviza, which is the smallest of the Balearic Islands, about a month back. Any other people except Spaniards would have been untiring in their efforts to learn what he had come to Iviza for. He had no business transactions with the fig and nut growers, and he didn't know a soul in the place. However, Iviza accepted him, and there he was.

He was really a very shady sort of customer—a man who had played many parts in life, very few of them being to his credit. It behooved him to obliterate himself for a while, and as he had journeyed from the Riviera to Barcelona, from Barcelona to Palma, the capital of Majorca, and thence to Iviza, which is some fifty miles away from Majorca, the detective who ferreted him out would be a man with an uncommon amount of talent in him.

"And now, my dear sir, are you ready?" asked the vice-consul, with a show of genial impatience.

"Perfectly. Perhaps if you were to mention incidentally that I am one of the Trotley Faulkners it might interest her ladyship. We are an old family, you know."

"Ah, yes, sir; and you English have all the pride of birth that we Castilians also possess. A fine thing, sir, to have blue blood in the veins!"

"Oh, very; nearly as fine as to have plenty of cash in one's pockets."

It was a funny scene, this introduction.

The Countess of Squirm was seated in the dining-room of Don John's hotel, watching throuhh her long-handled glasses the process of the *puchero* for the evening meal. Mademoiselle Marie, her maid, stood by the window looking very disconsolately at the rather muddy water of the little inner harbor of the place. Don John was stumping about the room with a good deal of swagger and an air of challenge that seemed to forebode another battle royal at any moment. And the fat-armed cook-maid, who was making the *puchero*, now and again peeped up from the mess of crabs' legs and mutton snippings to examine the countess's jewels and head-dress, and to make some request of Don John which that gentleman immediately blocked with a testy "Caramba, no! it is impossible."

"Your ladyship," said the vice-consul, advancing with a profound obeisance, "this is the English gentleman I have already spoke about — Mr. Faulkner — if you please!"

The Countess shot a quick searching glance at the man, and said "Good afternoon!" in the most casual manner.

Mademoiselle Marie, who was a Swiss girl of some five-and-twenty years, felt much more interested. She was rather pretty, and had a trick of pleasing British males.

"Surely, Countess," observed Mr. Faulkner, in a very easy tone, "you are much to be pitied for being in Iviza."

"Oh, am I? Is it such a very bad sort of hole, then?"

"Well, your ladyship sees what hotel accommodation it has, and——"

"Oh, there's nothing so very distressing about this—at least to me—I do assure you. I have lived for six weeks on end in Bedouin tents, and reckon myself an old traveller, sir!"

"That is something, certainly. I do hope you will not find the inconveniences of Iviza quite too oppressive. For my part——"

"Ah, yes, why are *you* here, Mr. Faulkner? There's no shooting to speak of, the guide-book says."

"No, I am no sportsman. I wanted seclusion for a time, to get through some—literary work."

"Really!" exclaimed the Countess, in an aroused manner. "How very interesting! Can you play cribbage?"

"I think I remember enough of it to say 'Yes.'"

"Then I tell you what, Mr. Faulkner; if you don't mind, we'll have a tussle this evening. Cribbage is one of my pet weaknesses. Squirm hates it, I am sorry to say, but he does not stand in the way of my playing. My poor mother had the same passion, and I have made a point of teaching it to my children. I wouldn't give a fig for a man or woman who doesn't know it.—Marie!"

"Your ladyship."

"Unpack the V case, and get out the cards and cribbage board. Shall we say at six this evening, then?"

"I am quite at your ladyship's commands," said Faulkner, much astonished.

"Thank you. *Au revoir!*"

"Well, I'll be hanged if I ever met such a woman!" exclaimed Mr. Faulkner when he was again outside and the familiar smell of the Iviza sewage matter assailed his nose. "Anyhow, we'll see how the evening turns out."

The Countess of Squirm was a chartered eccentric. She did things that would have distracted a husband less long-suffering than the Earl of Squirm. The Earl, however, let her go her own gait. She was his senior by nearly ten years; immensely rich, aud a Roman Catholic. Because she was so rich, and a Catholic, the

Earl, who was poor and Protestant, felt that he could not, even if he would, put his veto upon her propensities for gadding here, there, and everywhere, just when the whim took her.

Besides, at sixty a woman may generally go where she pleases in the world, and be safe from molestation.

Some said the Countess of Squirm was a second Lady Hester Stanhope. It was ouly half a compliment. She had characteristics in common with the great Lady Hester; but, unlike Lady Hester, with all her eccentricity she was sensible enough at heart. She was not in the least disposed to make herself into a prophetess, or anything of the kind.

She was an original woman of the world, who enjoyed her originality and the world. This seems a satisfactory brief portrayal of her.

And so, when she told the Delayahs that she would feel obliged to them if they would put her and her maid ashore in Iviza, it was felt that objections would be futile. The Delayahs protested, of course, that they did not like to leave her ladyship in a remote Spanish island, and alone. They insisted upon anchoring off Iviza to give her a chance of rejoining the yacht. But all this had no effect upon the Countess, and she told Mr. Delayah so flatly that she had had enough of his yacht and its luxuries, and that she would not go on board it again, that the gentleman was almost huffed. And so, when the boat returned to it, the master dallied off Iviza no longer, but put the vessel's head towards Palma of Majorca without more hesitation. Men don't understand women like Lady Squirm.

II.

Their first evening at cribbage was decidedly amusing to the Spaniards who were in the hotel. They had to sit to it in the dining-room when the gentlemen had done with their wine; and ten or twelve bad cigars were being smoked while they cut the cards and played.

Marie, the maid, thought it all extremely odious.

She preferred the English to Spaniards. And it cer-

tainly was trying to have to sit thus, as it were, on guard over an elderly lady who was well able to take care of herself.

As for the Countess, she was in high spirits. Situations of this kind were a real cordial to her. She showed remarkable vivacity, and Mr. Faulkner quite fancied he was getting well established in her ladyship's good graces. Fortunately for him (or perhaps unfortunately), he was a smart player. But he had the tact to bring each game to as close a fight as possible.

Towards ten o'clock, when they had played about twenty games, the Countess yawned without covering her mouth, and pushed the cribbage-board away.

"That will do, thank you, Mr. Faulkner, for the present. I owe you for seven games, do I not? Seven times five are thirty-five—I'll give it you in English money, if you don't mind. Marie, pay Mr. Faulkner thirty-five shillings. Good night!"

"Just as if I were a hairdresser, or something of the kind," muttered Mr. Faulkner to himself with a frown. But he squeezed the girl's pretty little hand when she offered him two sovereigns with a request for change.

"Do you want a receipt?" he asked.

"Monsieur!" exclaimed Marie, much shocked; and then she followed the Countess.

For three mortal days this life lasted, save for a couple of hours in the morning, when the Countess took the air in one of the somewhat rough little carts of Iviza. She and Mr. Faulkner were always at cribbage. In the course of that time the gentleman won about five pounds. It was not much, but it sufficed to pay his expenses at Iviza for a fortnight.

On the fourth morning the vice-consul bustled into the hotel.

"Your ladyship," he said, hurriedly, "there is an opportunity you may not like to miss. A barque has arrived this morning from Alicante, and she departs at sunset precisely for Trapani, in Sicily. If your ladyship still wishes——"

"Why, of course I do, Señor Marianas. It is the

very thing. Have the goodness to arrange for a passage at once, if the accommodation is no worse than this of Don John's. I shall have no difficulty in getting from Trapani up to Rome just in time for the Holy Week functions. Marie, is it not providential?"

"Yes, your ladyship," said the girl, much pleased. "But——" and she glanced towards Mr. Faulkner, who had by this endeared himself to her.

"But what?"

"How your ladyship will miss your cribbage with Mr. Faulkner!"

"For the matter of that, Countess," said the gentleman, immediately, "if you do not object to my society, I should be glad of the chance of reaching Sicily direct."

"Object! Of course not. It will suit me admirably, in fact: I shall have plenty of time for my revenge. She's bound to get becalmed somewhere. They're divine old slow-coaches, these Mediterraneaners!"

"Thank you," said Mr. Faulkner, with a look at Marie that the girl seemed to appreciate.

It was easily arranged. The captain of the Alfonso, as the barque was called, gave up his own room to the Countess and Marie, and the first officer inconvenienced himself for Mr. Faulkner.

Twenty-four hours after the entrance of the Alfonso into Iviza Bay the ship was a score of miles southeast of the island, and our three friends were on deck, under an awning, with the cribbage-board.

You must not suppose that all this time Mr. Faulkner was enjoying himself beyond measure. He was not. Really, he was well-nigh bored to death; but he endured the tedium for the sake of a certain little plan that he had concocted with himself. And it was also for the sake of this plan that he pretended to feel an affection for the girl Marie, who could not or would not disguise from him that she thought him a delightful gentleman.

"Well, I declare!" exclaimed her ladyship. "Two for his nob again, which gives you the game just when I seemed safe to play up. Mr. Faulkner, you must have been born under a lucky star. I hope your novels sell

well. You write under a *nom de plume*, of course. I wouldn't for anything print a book of mine under my own name."

This was the way in which the Countess was wont to rattle on. She seemed not to need a companion with the gift of speech. If he had ears to hear, and hands and a mind wherewith to play to her, that was sufficient.

They had good winds for their little voyage. This brought them within sight of Sicily in about a week from Iviza. The Countess was delighted. She had had enough of Mr. Faulkner. He had become "*vraiment un peu ennuyant!*" as she confided to her maid: which meant that she would cut herself adrift from him the moment they set foot on civilized land.

But Marie designed that it should be otherwise. She was in love with Mr. Faulkner as much as she could be in love with any one. And in their various moments of mutual conversation she had told Mr. Faulkner all about her ladyship's luggage—which trunk held the jewel-case, upon what bank the letters of credit were drawn, and so forth.

"My little angel!" Faulkner was wont to term her when they were quite alone. But though she was his little angel she never paid him a single shilling more than his due (from the cribbage-board), even by accident. She was a loyal little girl, though her heart was feminine and frivolous.

III.

Purple mountains and the deep blue sea—of such is the fair haven of Trapani composed. The town, too, is engaging and by no means a common haunt for the North European in search of the gay sunny life of the South.

No sooner had they got ashore and obtained lodging in the Golden Lion Inn than Mr. Faulkner wrote a letter in cipher and despatched it by a special messenger, upon whom he impressed that his life, or rather his pay (which was to be abundant), depended upon the promptitude of its delivery.

It was Thursday when the letter was despatched. An answer might be looked for on the Friday evening or Saturday morning.

"Well," said the Countess, when they were at dinner on the Thursday evening, "we will have our last game, Mr. Faulkner, to-night; and I prophesy to you that you will lose. Clever men like you always ruin themselves by not leaving off in time. Will you accept my challenge?"

"Why, certainly, Countess. But why may I not be privileged to continue travelling towards Italy with you?"

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Faulkner, for two reasons: first, because I propose to make an unconventional journey on horseback to Castellamare, there to catch the train for Palermo; and in the second place, because (you mustn't be offended) I think our acquaintance has lasted quite long enough."

"Oh, your ladyship!" exclaimed Marie, much shocked at this slight to so interesting, handsome, and self-sacrificial a gentleman.

"Yes, you do well, Marie, to reproach me," observed the Countess, with a little shrug of her shoulders; "but I am used to having my own way, Mr. Faulkner, and I generally say what I think. However, perhaps I do seem a little uncivil, especially as you can't really have cared much for all this cribbage with an old woman like me. I'll ask you, therefore, to be so good as to escort me to Castellamare."

"With the greatest pleasure," replied Mr. Faulkner, somewhat too eagerly. "But you will not think of starting before Saturday or Monday?"

"*Au contraire;* I shall start to-morrow morning, as early as possible."

"But your ladyship is not of iron. Besides, remember the road is not one of the safest."

"Brigands, eh? Well, I'd like above all things to have a brush with them, if it weren't for the delay of it. As it is, however, I'm in a hurry, and I fancy we are the more likely to get through safely just because we start

at once, before any exaggerated ideas and intelligence about Squirm's wealth and mine drift up towards the mountains. I have ordered horses for six o'clock, Mr. Faulkner."

"I think you are acting very imprudently, Countess. Will you not say Saturday morning?"

"I am sorry I cannot oblige you even so far, Mr. Faulkner. Cards, Marie!"

That evening the Countess won every game. It was most surprising. They played for three hours and a half, and Mr. Faulkner lost ten pounds.

"It is a case of Providence backing the big battalions after all, I fancy," her ladyship remarked, when she rose to go to bed. "Until to-morrow at six, then, Mr. Faulkner."

"Deuce take it!" exclaimed our friend when he was alone. He looked at his watch in a state of agitation. It was half-past ten—an hour when all Sicily is asleep. "There may just be time," he muttered. Thereupon he put on his hat, and went to the house of a man who was a notorious member of the Mafia. The two greeted each other with a sort of unholy fervor. They stayed in confabulation for half an hour. Then Mr. Faulkner returned to the Golden Lion, and the Mafia man having saddled his lean-ribbed little white pony, rode away towards the mountains at a fretful pace.

IV.

It was inexpressibly galling to Mr. Faulkner that nothing happened to alter her ladyship's plans for the morrow. The innkeeper himself aroused the gentleman with the words that the horses were ready at the door and that the Countess was breakfasting.

They started punctually at six o'clock, which is early for March. It was nipping cold, too; so cold that it gave Marie a blue nose, though it seemed only the more to brace her ladyship's energies.

"We shall have an enchanting excursion, Mr. Faulkner; I feel sure of it," she said, while eying him rather subtly.

"I trust we may," was his reply. For the life of him he could not refrain from satire at the Countess's expense. "I suppose your ladyship," he added, "will not attempt to play cribbage on the way?"

"I'm afraid it's impossible," she replied, with a sweet smile. "Besides, I'm quite content with my laurels of last night. You are sure, Marie, you have seen the luggage properly registered to Palermo?"

"Quite, your ladyship."

"Then there's nothing to do but bow to our friend the landlord, and be off."

The Countess of Squirm accordingly bowed to the proprietor of the Golden Lion and switched her horse.

"I don't think I was ever made such a fool of in all my days," muttered Mr. Faulkner to himself. "Well, it will be a lesson—I'll be hanged if it wont!"

Poor gentleman! If only he had known to what last extremity his unhallowed cupidity was to bring him, he would have been even more at discord with himself.

Two hours passed, and the party were all in the mountains. Marie had displayed a certain amount of respectful pettishness towards her mistress. She was unused to riding, and her animal was none of the most urbane in disposition. But the Countess took her maid's ill-humor in admirable part, and wherever she looked she smiled. Towards eleven o'clock, when they were nearing a place which the guide said would make a capital bivouac, it began to rain. This was bad. But hardly ten minutes later, worse followed. Three picturesque-looking rogues with guns on their shoulders stepped from a wood called the Bosco di Sparagio, and having saluted the Countess, brought the party to a halt. The guide uttered the one word "Banditti!" and took to his heels. No one heeded him.

Mr. Faulkner at once entered into heated conversation with the three men. There seemed to be something wrong. They were not the men he expected; and at length he had to turn to the Countess with consternation written on his face.

"This is a pretty condition of affairs," he said.

"And how long will they keep us?" asked the Countess, with a look of elation which said as plainly as an expression may speak, "At last I have reached the highest summit of my ambition. I have lived sixty years, and never until to-day have I come across a real live brigand."

"How should I know? It is unfortunate that your ladyship is the Countess of Squirm—unfortunate for me, that is."

"Oh, come now, don't say that. We are in the same box, anyhow, and I shall take care that you do not suffer on my account."

"Your ladyship is very good," observed Mr. Faulkner.

They had no time to say more just then, for the brigands urged them to ascend the mountain to the right by a track that left a good deal to be desired. The helpless Marie in particular was soon at her wits' end. She slipped off her horse twice, and at length, after an indignant protest, had to submit to be held up by one of the three rogues, their captors. He was the ugliest of them, which did not tend to soothe her.

Thus they came at length to a glen, high up and looking towards the Mediterranean. There was a dismal rain-cloud low upon them at the time, and even the Countess of Squirm's spirits had somewhat abated. It was fully two hours past her luncheon hour, and the guide's pony had carried off the provision-basket as well as its master.

It was the usual thing, this haunt of the bandits. There was a nice smooth little plateau with precipitous rocks on three sides of it, accessible by one track only, and that a sufficiently perilous one. The bandits' home was a cave with a very dirty black face. A good deal of brushwood piled near told of the fires which were responsible for this discoloration.

The troop consisted of but five men, including the *capo*. There was one woman in the establishment—the captain's wife. All the five, and the woman too, seemed rarely pleased with their luck in having captured the millionaire *duchessa*, of whose arrival in Trapani, and

subsequent eccentric intentions, they had had brisk intelligence. Dinner was, at her ladyship's request, served as quickly as possible.

With her usual *savoir faire*, she had entered into immediate negotiation with the *capo*. It was a case of ransom, of course; the matter to be decided upon was, equally of course, the amount.

"We will talk it over while we eat your macaroni," said her ladyship, lightly. "But have the goodness to remember that I must be in Palermo before this time to-morrow."

The *capo* shrugged his shoulders and said, "It is possible." Then, turning to Mr. Faulkner, who seemed stupefied by this incident, he flourished his hands towards him, and, still speaking to the Countess, remarked that if her ladyship was content to leave his illustriousness the duke as a hostage until the payment of the ransom, he thought her ladyship might catch the evening train from Castellamare to Palermo.

"Pardon," interposed Mr. Faulkner, "but I am not privileged to be the duke."

"Without doubt, excellency?" said the *capo*, with an obnoxious grin of incredulity.

"He is not my husband, nor has he anything to do with me," exclaimed the Countess. "I am afraid we shall all have to stay here a little while after all."

"Oh, but you will alter your mind when you have rested," said the *capo*. "Besides, we are short of provisions. It is a hardship, but true."

In fact, the dinner was a very sad one. The macaroni was indifferently cooked, and as an *entrée* a sheep's windpipe was served. Not one of the captives would be introduced to this tempting dish, and so the dinner was not a success.

"Mr. Faulkner," said the Countess, seriously, when she saw that there was nothing to follow the windpipe, "let us talk this matter over. He wants fifty thousand pounds for the three of us. It's ridiculous, and we can make them happy with a good deal less, I don't doubt. What I want to know is, will you be content to act as hostage? There's no other way out of it that I can see."

"I will do anything to oblige your ladyship," said Mr. Faulkner, with ill-concealed vexation.

"You must allow me to take this on my shoulders. The escapade is mine, and I must pay for it. It's not a bit of good trying to convince them that you aren't my husband, and there's an end of it. Dear me! it would be diverting to have Squirm here, really!"

"Capo!" called Mr. Faulkner.

The brigand leader was as anxious to get so precious a lady as the Countess off his hands as she was to leave him. Finally, it was agreed that Mr. Faulkner should stay on Mount Sparagio until twenty thousand pounds had been paid to the rogues. The Countess promised to use all possible expedition. At Rome she proposed to make arrangements for the procural of the money, and thence it would be despatched without delay.

This settled, two of the rascals constituted themselves guides to her ladyship and the gentle Marie. They led them to Castellamare by a short bridle-path, which enabled them to reach Palermo the same evening. Thence, the next day, they proceeded to Naples, and from Naples they soon reached Rome.

Here, to the Countess's utter consternation, it was discovered that the pocket-book containing the address to which the bandit wished their money to be conveyed was missing.

Her ladyship wrote at once to the British consul in Palermo, imploring him to make inquiries. But these inquiries were of no avail. The local *gendarmerie* had already had news of the abduction, and they were in possession of Mount Sparagio and the district. So hot was their siege, in fact, that the *capo* and the troop, with Mr. Faulkner in their charge, absconded towards the mountains of the interior. Of course, however, they left a shrewd deputy behind them, to receive the twenty thousand pounds.

For a month the rascals put up with the discomforts this hue and cry had brought upon them. They reckoned they would eventually have their reward. With the ransom they would retire forever from brigandage and become decent landowners.

But when five weeks had passed, and not even a line reached them about the money, they became exceedingly impatient. They had already been somewhat uncivil to the "duke," as they called Mr. Faulkner. This gentleman had tried all ways to get into their good graces, but in vain. They were not Mafia Sicilians, and would not believe in his insinuations that he was a member of that order. When he told them point-blank that he himself had been scheming for the capture of the Countess of Squirm in alliance with these same Mafia men, they grew furious. They would not, they said, tolerate being thus jested with by his excellency much longer.

"If," said the *capo*, "your dukeship is not ransomed by Thursday next, we shall deprive your excellency of his ears. They will be sent to this address of 'Madama,' with which she was so good as to furnish us."

It was vain for Mr. Faulkner to protest.

Thursday arrived. At sunset our poor friend was cropped; and the same evening the appendages were packed and sent prepaid to England. This was the only clue to him that remained when three months had passed.

The Countess of Squirm and her maid returned to England in Whitsun week, and among her ladyship's letters was a small parcel containing two withered ears and a line of scrawl which said that, unless the twenty thousand pounds were sent in a month, his excellency the duke would have his throat cut. The money was not sent, for the reason already mentioned. There is no doubt, therefore, that Mr. Faulkner died a violent death.

The Countess was naturally much distressed to think that she should be the cause, though the innocent cause, of a fellow-creature's assassination; but, being a devout Catholic, she had recourse to her confessor, who at length consoled her.

Marie, the maid, was somewhat more persistent in her grief. She had not outgrown her heart. But at the end of a year even she had almost forgotten "the gentleman who played cribbage with her ladyship." Mr. Faulkner was then remembered only by his various creditors in different parts of the world.

A hundred people went through the meadow of Fedwar and saw only that it was full of weeds; but Shori, who was the hundred-and-first man, stopped and gathered the incense-breathing flower, *Wali*. The following story is by Fred. A. Wilson, and is republished from the *Evening Sun*.

A CHINAMAN'S BABY GOD.

THIS was told in the council room of the Chong Wah Kung Saw, when the incense sticks of the Sheung-tai were smouldering, and the sacred fire of t'aan-heung was burning before the shrine.

Moi Hing, who married a ch'an white woman, had become a father. He had left his t'ong-yan wife in Kwang-tung, and said he would never go back to the land of his Emperor. He married a German girl when he kept a laundry in Brooklyn, and so great was the wrath of her parents that he had to run away to New York with her and leave his laundry in the care of his cousin, Moi Hauk. He rented one room up near the roof of a four-story tenement in Park Street, within the throw of a stone by a child from Mott Street. It was not a fine place for a white man to live, and white men had not lived there for years. Chinamen do not mind dark rooms, and the German girl who married Moi Hing made the best of her bargain by not complaining.

Around the yat bunlows and in the fan tan shops they call Moi Hing paan-tim-ke-yat, the Freckled One, because when the disease which the English call small-pox raged in the Kwang-tung district he came back to life like one whom the gods desire to reserve for a different fate. But his skin was no longer smooth. It showed the claw-marks of the monster represented in the picture books as having eyes of fire and claws of steel.

The men in the fan tan shops always liked to see the Freckled One come around, for they knew he would not

go away until he left them all his money to keep until he won it back. And he never stayed very long.

They talked of these things because it came before the story told with excited gesture to the forty in the ebony chairs. The Freckled One had, when his face was smooth as that of a Peking belle, learned how to carve curious things out of wood from a master of the art. He had learned so well that he used to carve the gods of the sea and of earth and of heaven for the shrines in the Joss houses. But the ch'uut-tan monster who left marks upon the faces of his victims when he did not kill had stricken Moi Hing down while he was at labor, and when he was well again he could not bear to look upon the work done with sharp knives and skilful hands.

The baby which was born to him had blue eyes and hair like the fine threads of gold with which the people of Yat-poon-kwok made wonderful embroidery.

"The American God has smiled upon it," said Moi Hing when he first saw it. "A little god has been sent to me to atone for the work of the Chinese monster," and he passed one hand over his pitted face, and taking off his sandals, salaamed three times before the bed and poured wine upon the floor.

He went out and bought woods that were hard, and when he brought them to the room which was lighted only by one window he began to carve as he used to do in Kwang-tung under the master. But he found new subjects for his work, and instead of reproducing on the block of wood the deities of the Imperial Dynasty or the sea gods with eyes like fishes and scales on their breasts, he carved out the images of children, with round eyes, like the blue ones his baby had, and he put wreaths around their heads.

It was a wonderful piece of work, and he kept at it by the yellow light of his tang at night and by the gray light which came through the window during the day. When it was finished he set it on the floor against the wall, and he built a p'aang, or platform, in front of it, and upon this he made the baby's bed. At each corner

were burning Joss sticks, and as the incense went up in a straight line he believed the God of the white people was satisfied.

All of his money he spent for incense offerings for the blue-eyed one, and he placed gifts before the platform—little tooi-haai, made of blue satin, which should be put on the little feet some day—and made garments of brocaded silk and a cap with a red button of the third degree upon it.

The cousin in the laundry in Brooklyn proved unfaithful, and said there was no money there, and the hand of the Evil One was laid upon the brain of Moi Hing. Hing saw strange things, and when he walked on the street he talked to himself and cursed the men of his own race. He went into the fan tan shops and demanded the money he had lost weeks before. In order to get rid of him, they gave him a few pieces of silver. After the first visit, when they saw him coming the keepers would say:

"Here comes the crazy Freckled One. Give him some cash or he will bring us bad luck."

The story of the Freckled One's blue-eyed baby soon became common report, but no Chinaman ever saw the face of the child, so zealously was that one little room guarded. From want, the little German mother grew thin and pale. They had their bowl of rice three times a day, and sometimes the Freckled One would bring from the restaurant some chan che gett, the feet of a sow, pickled.

But he had no eyes for the suffering of his wife, nor would he listen to her just complaints. He spent most of his time in the worship of his little white god, as he called the baby. The Chinese society would have helped him had he made known his wants, but he scorned all who spoke the language.

This story filled the forty who listened with amazement. They had known nothing of the life of the crazy Freckled One who accused and cursed his own race. And the teller came to almost the last, and said that Moi Hing must be sent back to the hills of Kwang-

tung, for even now his spirit was seeking release from a worn-out body. He told how Moi Hing had worshipped all one night before the platform, and called the blue-eyed baby a white god, destined by Heaven to grow up into a fine woman and deliver the Chinese from the control of the Imperial Dynasty, in fulfilment of the prophecy made more than a thousand years ago.

Wearied with his devotions, Moi Hing had at last fallen asleep. The little German wife had wanted to take the baby to her bed, but he had said no. So, when he was asleep, she who had been waiting crept out of bed toward the shrine and took the baby in her arms. It was cold and still, and she nestled it close to her breast, as mothers always do, and smiling at her treasure, fell asleep.

Two hours had passed by when she woke up again. The baby had not moved. Its legs and arms were cold and rigid, and the eyes were half open. It was dead. She lifted the wee bit of clay and kissed it as though she would give it some of her own life. She called it ho yeung, and her tears fell upon the wisps of golden hair.

The sounds of her grief came to the ears of her sleeping husband. He crawled to his knees and made an obeisance before the shrine. The Joss sticks had burned down to the wood and had gone out. He jumped to his feet with a cry like an animal at the fatal shot, and began to light new sticks. Then, for the first time, he saw the child was gone. He saw it in its mother's arms. He snatched it from her and felt its cold cheek. Like a lump of lead he went down on the bare floor with the baby still in his arms.

When he struggled to his feet like a man upon whom the yen yen is strong, his wife was gone—she had fled in terror. With a hatchet he chopped the shrine to bits and laid waste the furniture.

The ones who had been told this strange story by the German wife found him in the room with the baby. After the funeral she went to Brooklyn. He will go back to China, but will remember nothing. They call him the Idiot.

One of the latest theories concerning sleep is that so far from it being a time of rest, it is the period in which our subtler essence, for the time relieved from the claims of its grosser earthly habitation, finds its greatest activity. This theory, if proved, would furnish the solution to the question at issue in this story of Erckmann-Chatrain, and translated for ROMANCE by Leonard S. Myers.

SKETCHED AT MIDNIGHT.

I.

In front of Saint Sebaldus's chapel at Nuremberg, at the corner of the street, there stands a small inn, narrow and high, with tumble-down gables and dusty panes, its roof surmounted by a plaster Virgin. There I passed the saddest days of my life. I had gone to Nuremberg to study the old German masters, but lack of ready money drove me to paint portraits—and such portraits! Fat old gossips with their cats on their laps, bewigged aldermen and burghermeisters, with cocked hats, all gaudy with red and yellow.

From portraits I descended to outlines, and then to silhouettes.

There is nothing more disagreeable than to have an innkeeper always dunning you, with his sneers, loud voice, and impudent air, coming each day and saying: "Do you intend paying me soon, sir? do you know how your account is running up? No, that does not disturb you. . . . Monsieur eats, drinks, and sleeps tranquilly. God provides for the little birds! Monsieur's account amounts to two hundred florins and ten kreutzers . . . . it is not worth speaking of."

Those who have not heard them run this gamut can form no idea of it; love of art, imagination, and enthusiasm consecrated to the beautiful, wither before the blast of such a fellow. One becomes awkward, timid, loses his energy as well as the sense of personal dignity, and is subservient to every one.

One night, as usual not having a cent and threatened

with prison by this worthy Master Rap, I resolved to disappoint him by cutting my throat. In this agreeable mood, seated on my cot facing the window, I gave myself up to a thousand philosophical reflections, more or less cheering.

I dared not open my razor, for fear that the convincing force of my logic might inspire me with courage to follow it out. After having reasoned at length, I put out my candle, deferring the sequel till next day.

This abominable Rap had completely dulled me. I no longer saw anything in art except silhouettes, and my only desire was for money, to rid me of his odious presence. But that night there came a singular revolution in my mind. I rose in about an hour, lighted my lamp, and enveloping myself in a gray wrapper, I threw off a rapid sketch of the Flemish school—something strange and bizarre, and without resemblance to my usual conceptions.

Picture to yourself a gloomy court, surrounded by high walls falling into ruin. These walls are provided with hooks at seven to eight feet from the ground, suggesting at first glance a slaughter-house. On the left, a lath trellis extends. You observe, through it, a quarter of beef suspended from a vault by large pulleys. Great pools of blood trickle along a slab, towards a gutter full of shapeless refuse. The light comes from above, between the chimneys, whose weather-vanes stand out against the heavens, and the roofs of the neighboring houses cast deep shadows, like scaffolding, from story to story. At the end of this pest-hole there stands a shed; under it is a wood-pile, with a ladder, some bundles of straw, coils of rope, a hen-coop, and an old, unused rabbit-cub on it.

How were these odd details presented to my imagination? I do not know; I had no reminiscence akin to it, and yet each stroke of the pencil was an act of observation, fantastic by reason of its realism. Nothing was wanting.

But to the right, a corner of the sketch remained bare—I could not imagine what to put there. Suddenly

something stirred—moved. Then I saw a foot—a foot turned up, above the ground. Notwithstanding this improbable position, I followed the inspiration, without considering my own notion. The foot was joined to a leg; on the leg, pulled tightly, soon appeared a flap of a dress. Briefly, an old woman, ghastly, wasted, dishevelled, gradually came into view, thrown down on the edge of a well and struggling against a hand which was squeezing her throat. It was a scene of murder I was designing. The pencil fell from my hand.

This woman, in a most frightful position, her back bent over the brink of the well, her face contracted with terror, her two hands rigidly grasping the murderer's arm, filled me with fear. I did not dare to look at her. But the man! he! the personage to whom this arm belonged, him I could not see. It was impossible for me to distinguish him.

"I am worn out," I said to myself, my forehead bathed with perspiration; "there only remains that figure to finish; I will do it to-morrow—it will be easy——"

I again retired, quite aghast at my vision. Five minutes afterwards I was sleeping heavily.

The next day I arose early. I had just dressed myself, and was preparing to recommence the interrupted work when, two low knocks sounded on the door.

"Come in!"

The door opened. A man already old, tall and lean, and clothed in black, stood on the threshold. The appearance of this man, with eyes close together and a large nose like an eagle's beak, overhung by a high forehead, had something severe in it. He bowed to me gravely.

"M. Christian Venius the artist?" said he.

"I am, monsieur."

He bowed again, adding: "The Baron Frederick van Spreckdal."

The visit to my poor lodgings of the rich amateur, Van Spreckdal, Judge of the Criminal Tribunal, impressed me deeply. I could not refrain from casting a quick glance at the moth-eaten furniture, the mouldy

hangings and dusty floor. I felt humiliated to be found in such dilapidated quarters, but Van Spreckdal did not appear to notice these details, and seated himself before my little table.

"Master Venius," said he, "I came——"

But at the same instant his eyes rested on the unfinished sketch. He did not continue his sentence. I was seated on the edge of the cot, and the sudden attention this person bestowed upon one of my productions made my heart beat with an indefinable dread.

After about a minute Van Spreckdal raised his head.

"Are you the author of this sketch?" he asked, with a fixed look.

"Yes, monsieur."

"What is its price?"

"I do not sell my sketches—it is the design of a painting."

"Ah!" he exclaimed, raising the paper with the end of his long yellow fingers.

He pulled out a glass from his waistcoat, and commenced to study the design in silence. The sun was then shining obliquely into my garret. Van Spreckdal said not a word; his big nose became crooked like a claw, his large brow contracted, and his chin coming to a point, hollowed many little wrinkles in his long, lean cheeks. The silence was so great that I distinctly heard the buzzing of a fly caught in a spider's web.

"And the size of this picture, Master Venius?" he asked, finally, without looking at me.

"Three feet by four."

"The price?"

"Fifty ducats."

Van Spreckdal placed the design on the table and drew from his pocket a pear-shaped green silk purse; he slid its rings.

"Fifty ducats!" said he; "here they are."

I was dazed.

The Baron had risen; he bowed to me, and I heard his heavy cane resound on each step to the bottom of the stairs. Then, recovered from my surprise, I sud-

denly remembered that I had not thanked him, and I descended the five stories like lightning; but, arrived at the threshold, I looked carefully to the right and left; the street was deserted.

It is strange, thought I, and I went up the stairs, quite out of breath.

II.

The surprising manner in which Van Spreckdal had just visited me threw me into a profound rapture. "Yesterday," I said to myself, looking at the pile of ducats glittering in the sun—"yesterday I intended to cut my throat for a few miserable florins, and behold! to-day a fortune falls to me from the clouds. I certainly did well in not opening my razor, and if the temptation to do so ever comes to me again, I shall take care to put the thing off till next day."

After these judicious reflections, I seated myself to finish the sketch; a few strokes of the pencil and it would be completed. But here something incomprehensible awaited me. Those few strokes of the pencil it was impossible for me to give; I had lost the thread of my inspiration; the mysterious person would not release his limbs from my brain. I tried to sketch him, to imagine, to take him up again; he no more corresponded with the *ensemble* than does a figure of Raphael in one of Teniers's tap-rooms. I fell into a profuse perspiration.

At this very moment, Rap opened the door, without knocking, according to his praiseworthy habit; his eyes fixed themselves on my pile of ducats, and with a shrill voice he cried out:

"Eh, eh! I have caught you. Do you still say, mister painter, that you lack money?"

And his crooked fingers extended with that nervous trembling which the sight of gold always produces in the avaricious. The remembrance of all the insults this individual had inflicted on me, his covetous look, his impudent leer, quite exasperated me. With one leap, I seized him, and pushing him out of the room with both hands, I slammed the door against his nose.

Outside, the old usurer shrilly cried out: "My money, robber—my money!"

The lodgers came out of their rooms and asked: "What is the matter now? What has happened?"

I quickly opened the door, and giving Master Rap a terrible kick on the spine, which sent him rolling more than twenty paces, I exclaimed, beside myself, "That is what has happened."

Then I closed the door with a slam, while bursts of laughter greeted Master Rap from the lodgers in the passage.

I was pleased with myself, and rubbed my hands. This event had brought back my humor. I took up my work and set about finishing the sketch, when an unusual noise struck my ears. Some musket-stocks were rested on the pavement below; I looked out of my window, and saw three *gendarmes*, their muskets at rest, on duty at the entrance.

"Could that villanous Rap have broken a limb?" asked I, with fear.

And, with the strange whimsicality of human nature, I, who thought the day before of cutting my throat, trembled, even to the marrow of my bones, to think that I should be hanged if Rap were dead.

Suddenly some one tried to open the door. It was locked. Then there was a general outcry.

"In the name of the law—open!"

I tremblingly arose, my limbs tottering.

"Open!" repeated the same voice.

The idea occurred to me to save myself by the roof; but scarcely had I put my head out of the little window, when I drew back, seized with vertigo. I had seen, in a flash, all the windows below, with their reflecting panes, their flower-pots, bird-cages, and gratings. And lower, the balcony; lower still, the lamp; and below this, the sign of the Red Lion, adorned with iron scrolls; then finally the three glistening bayonets, which only awaited my fall to run me through from the soles of my feet to my neck. On the roof of the opposite house, in the angle between it and the chimney, a large gray

cat lay in wait for some sparrows chattering and fighting in the gutter.

One can scarcely imagine the clearness, power, and quickness of vision the eye of man possesses when he is stimulated by fear.

At the third summons, "Open, or it will be broken in!" seeing that flight was impossible, I staggered to the door and turned the lock.

Two hands at once seized my collar. A short, thick-set man, smelling of wine, said to me, "I arrest you."

He wore a bottle-green frock-coat, buttoned up to his chin, and a stove-pipe hat; he had a long brown beard, and rings on every finger. His name was Passauf. It was the chief of police. Five bull-dog faces with flat caps and broad noses, their lower jaws protruding, watched me from without.

"What do you wish?" I asked of Passauf.

"Come along!" exclaimed he, brusquely, while making a sign to one of his men to seize me.

He dragged me along, more dead than alive, while the others searched my room from top to bottom.

I descended, supported under the arms like a consumptive in the last stages, and bearing my full weight with every step. They threw me into a cab, between two lusty fellows, who considerately permitted me to see the ends of the clubs fastened to their belts—then the cab set off.

I heard the footsteps of all the gamins of the city pattering behind us.

"What have I done?" I asked of one of my guards.

He looked at the other with a peculiar smile, and said, "Hans, he asks what he has done!"

That smile froze my blood.

Soon we were almost enveloped in darkness; the steps of the horses resounded in an archway. We entered the jail. From Rap's clutches, I fell into prison, whence very few poor devils escape unpunished.

Large, dark courtyards. Square windows provided with ventilators; not a tuft of grass, not an ivy vine,

not even a weathercock, in view—these were my new quarters. It was enough to fill me with despair.

The agents of the police, accompanied by the jailer, put me, for the time being, into the detention room. The jailer, as I now recall it, was named Kasper Schlüssel; with his gray woollen cap, his pipe-stem between his teeth, and his bunch of keys at his belt, he produced on me the effect of the owl-god of the Caribs. He had large round yellow eyes, such as see in the night, an owl-like nose, and a neck sunk in his shoulders. Schlüssel locked me in as unconcernedly as one locks clothing in his wardrobe while thinking of other matters. As to me, my hands crossed behind my back, my head bent, I remained more than ten minutes on the same spot. After a time I made the following reflection: Rap, in falling, had cried out, "I am killed!" but he did not say by whom. I shall claim it was my neighbor, the old spectacle dealer.

This idea consoled me, and I gave vent to a long sigh. Then I looked about my cell. It had just been whitewashed again, and its walls were entirely bare except for a gallows roughly drawn by my predecessor, in a corner. The light came from a bull's-eye about nine feet from the floor; the furniture consisted of a bundle of straw and a bench. I seated myself on the straw, with my hands clasped around my knees, in utter despondency. My mind was muddled, but supposing that Rap, before dying, had denounced me, I felt my limbs twitch, and with a choking sensation, as if the hempen tie already bound my throat, I got up.

At the same instant I heard Schlüssel come along the corridor; he opened the door and ordered me to follow him. He was always accompained by two attendants, therefore I marched after him without delay.

We crossed the long galleries, lighted here and there by some inner windows. I saw, behind the bars, a famous murderer, who was to be executed the next day. He wore a strait-jacket, and was singing in a hoarse voice. Seeing me, he called out, "Ah, comrade, I am keeping a place on my right for you."

The jailer and his attendants smiled at each other, while a shudder crept down my back.

III.

Schlüssel thrust me into a high and gloomy hall, with benches in a semicircle. The aspect of this hall, with its two high, grated windows, its Christ in old polished oak, his arms stretched out and his head bowed in anguish on his shoulder, inspired in me a religious fear in accord with my actual situation. All my thoughts of a false accusation disappeared, and my lips moved, murmuring a prayer. It had been long since I had prayed, but misfortune always leads us to thoughts of devotion. Man is so insignificant.

Before me, on a raised seat, were two persons, with their backs to the light, which left their faces in the shade. Nevertheless, I recognized Van Spreckdal by his aquiline profile, lighted up by the reflection from a glass. The other man was large; he had a full face, and his hands were short; he wore the judge's robe, as Van Spreckdal did. Below, Conrad the clerk was seated; he was writing on a low table, and occasionally rubbing his ear with his quill. On my arrival he stopped, to look at me with an air of curiosity.

I was ordered to sit down, and Van Spreckdal, raising his voice, said to me, "Christian Venius, where did you obtain this design?"

He showed me the night sketch, then in his possession. He caused it to be handed to me. After having examined it, I replied, "I am the artist."

There was quite a long silence; the clerk took down my reply. I heard his pen run over the paper, and I thought: "What is the meaning of this question they have just put to me? It has nothing to do with my kick on Rap's spine."

"You are the artist?" replied Van Spreckdal. "What is the subject?"

"The subject is one of my imagination."

"You have not copied these details in any particular?"

"No, sir; I have imagined them all."

"Prisoner Christian," said the judge, in a severe tone, "I invite you to reflect. Do not lie!"

I reddened, and in a loud tone exclaimed, "I have spoken the truth."

"Take down the reply, clerk," said Van Spreckdal.

The pen ran anew.

"And this woman," continued the judge—"this woman, murdered on the edge of this well, have you also imagined her?"

"Undoubtedly."

"You have never seen her?"

"Never."

Van Spreckdal rose, as if indignant; then sitting down again, he seemed to consult in a low voice with his associate.

Those two dark profiles, standing out against the light background of the window—the three jailers—the deep silence in the hall—filled me with fear.

"What do they wish of me? What have I done?" murmured I.

Suddenly Van Spreckdal said to my guards, "You can reconduct the prisoner to the carriage; we shall start for Metzer Strasse."

Then, addressing me, "Christian Venius," he exclaimed, "you are in a deplorable state. Recollect yourself, and consider that if man's justice is inflexible, God's mercy awaits you. You can merit it by avowing your crime."

His words stunned me like a blow. I fell back, with my arms stretched out, saying, "Ah! what a frightful dream!"

And I fainted.

When I returned to consciousness, the carriage was rolling slowly along the street; another preceded us. The two police agents were always there. One of them, on the way, offered a pinch of snuff to his fellow-officer; mechanically I stretched out my fingers toward the snuff-box; he quickly drew it back.

The blush of shame rushed to my cheeks, and I turned my head to conceal my feelings.

"If you look out," said this man, "we shall be forced to place handcuffs on you."

"May the devil choke you, you infernal scoundrel!" thought I. As the carriage had just stopped, one of them got down, while the other held me by the collar; then, seeing his comrade ready to receive me, he pushed me out roughly. These numerous precautions to make sure of my person foreboded me no good; but I was far from foreseeing the seriousness of the accusation which hung over me, when a frightful event opened my eyes at last and threw me into despair.

My guards thrust me into a dirty alley, with an uneven and broken pavement; along the wall trickled a yellowish ooze, giving forth a sickening stench. I walked in the middle of the dark passage, the two men following me. Far in, the dim light of an inner court was seen. The further I advanced, the more and more was I overcome with terror. It was not an ordinary feeling, but a deep, supernatural presage, like a nightmare. I instinctively recoiled at each step.

"Go on," exclaimed one of my guards, placing his hand on my shoulder; "hurry up."

What was my dismay when, at the end of the passage, I saw the court I had sketched the night before, with its walls lined with hooks, its hen-coop and rabbit-cub. Not a ray of light, big or small, far up or down; not a broken pane of glass, not a single detail, had been omitted.

I stood thunderstruck by this strange revelation.

Near the well the two judges, Van Spreckdal and Richter, were standing. At their feet, the old woman was lying flat on her back, her long gray hair dishevelled and her face discolored, with her eyes wide open and her tongue fastened between her teeth. It was a horrible sight.

"Well," said Van Spreckdal to me, in an awful voice, "what have you to say?"

I did not reply.

"Do you remember, now, having thrown this woman,

Theresa Becker, into this well, after having strangled her to rob her of her money?"

"No!" cried I—"no! I do not know that woman: I have never seen her, so help me God!"

"That is enough," replied he, in a sharp tone. And, without adding a word, he rapidly walked away with his associate.

The police then thought it necessary to put the handcuffs on me. They again led me to the jail. I no longer knew what to think or do—even my conscience troubled me; I asked myself if I had not assassinated the old woman. In the eyes of my guards I was already convicted.

I shall not detail my emotions during the night in prison, when, seated on the bundle of straw, with the light in front of me and the gallows in view, I heard the watchman cry out in the silence, "Sleep, good people of Nuremberg; may the Lord watch over you! One o'clock! two o'clock! three o'clock!"

Every one can form an idea of a night like it. It has been well said that it is better to be hanged innocent than guilty. For the soul, yes, but for the body it makes no difference; on the contrary, it curses its lot and seeks to escape, well knowing that its *rôle* ends with the rope. Added to that, it repents of not having sufficiently enjoyed life—of having listened to the soul preaching abstinence. "Ah! if I had known," it reasons, "you would not have led me in bonds with your big words, your beautiful phrases, and grand speeches. You would not have lured me with your fine promises. I should have had a good time, and the opportunity for this is now gone. It is over!! You tell me to subdue my passions—well! I have overcome them. I am about to be hanged; and thou! later they will call thee sublime soul, martyr to the errors of justice. There will be no thought of me."

Such were the sad reflections of the flesh.

The day approached; at first wan and indistinct, it illumined with its dim light the bull's-eye and the cross-

bars; then it cast itself on the lower part of the wall. Outside, the street became animated; it was Friday. I heard the vegetable carts pass, and the honest countrymen burdened with their dorsels. Some caged hens were cackling, and the butter dealers were talking together. The market opposite was opening, and the benches were being arranged.

At last broad daylight came, and the great murmuring of the crowd, which was increasing, of the housewives who were gathering, with their baskets on their arm, going and coming, pricing and buying, told me it was about eight o'clock.

With the day I became a little more hopeful. Some of my gloomy thoughts disappeared. I felt a desire to see what was going on outside.

Some occupants, before me, had raised themselves to the bull's-eye; they had dug holes in the wall to get up more easily. I, in my turn, climbed up, and when, seated in the opening, with head bent, I could see the crowd, the life, the bustle, tears ran down my cheeks. I no longer thought of suicide. I felt an extraordinary desire to live.

"Ah!" thought I, "to live, 'tis to be happy! If they would only permit me to drag a barrow, if they should attach a ball and chain to my limbs—what would it matter, provided I lived!"

The old market, with its cone-shaped roof supported by heavy pillars, was a beautiful sight. The women seated in front of their vegetables, with their hen-coops and egg-baskets; behind them, the Jew notion dealers, with yellow faces; the butchers, with bared arms, cutting the meats on their stalls; the countrymen, their large felt hats set on the back of their heads, quiet and stupid looking, with their hands behind them, leaning on their holly sticks and soberly smoking their pipes. Then the people, the noise of the crowd, the shrill, the brawling, the deep, the loud, voices—the expressive gestures—those unusual attitudes which show, at a distance, the progress of discussions and portray so well the character of the individual—all captivated my

mind, and, notwithstanding my sad situation, I was happy because I was still in the world.

Now, while I was thus looking on, a man, a butcher, passed by, his back bent, carrying an enormous quarter of beef on his shoulders; his arms were bared and raised above his head, and his head bowed. His long hair floating, like that of Salvators Sicambre, hid his face from me, and yet, at the first sight of him, I trembled.

"It is he!" I exclaimed.

The blood rushed to my heart. I jumped to the floor, trembling, my cheeks quivering and a pallor extending over my face, and I gasped in a smothered voice: "It is he! he is there—there, and I may be hanged to expiate his crime. O God! what can be done? what can I do?

A sudden idea, an inspiration from Heaven, crossed my mind. I felt in my pocket; my crayon box was there. Then, rushing to the wall, I commenced to trace the scene of the murder with strange rapture. No more uncertainty, no more groping—I knew the man—I had seen him. He had stood before me. At ten o'clock the jailer entered my cell. His impassibility gave place to astonishment.

"Is it possible?" exclaimed he, stopping at the threshold.

"Go seek my judges," I said, continuing my work with increasing excitement.

Schlüssel replied, "They await you in the court-room."

"I wish to make a revelation," exclaimed I, giving the last stroke to the mysterious person.

He lived; he was frightful to see. His figure, facing the room, foreshortened on the wall, stood out from the white background like life.

The jailer went out. A few minutes afterward the two judges appeared. They stood astonished.

I, with extended hand, trembling in every limb, said to them, "There is the assassin!"

Van Spreckdal, after some moments of silence, asked me his name.

"I do not know it; but he is at this moment in the market, cutting meat at the third stall on the left, entering from the street."

"What do you think?" he asked, turning to his associate.

"Let this man be sought for," replied the other, in a low voice.

Several guards standing in the corridor obeyed this order. The judges remained there, still looking at the sketch. I had sunk down on the straw, utterly exhausted.

Soon steps were heard at a distance, in the corridor. Those who have not awaited an hour of deliverance and counted the minutes, then as long as years—those who have not been subjected to deep emotions of expectation, fear, hope, and doubt, cannot conceive what I experienced at this time.

I could distinguish the murderer's step, walking between the guards, from all the others. They drew near—the judges themselves seemed moved. I had raised my head, and with my heart fixed as if in a grasp of iron, looked steadily at the closed door. It opened; the man entered. His cheeks were ruddy, his jaws protruded, and his little eyes, red and restless as those of a wolf, glittered under his heavy red brows.

Van Spreckdal showed him the sketch in silence.

Then this bloodthirsty man, after looking at it, became white with fear, and uttering a roar which frightened us, stretched out his enormous arms and made a leap backward to upset the guards. There was a frightful struggle in the corridor; we heard the butcher's panting breath, some oaths and quick words, and the guards' feet raised from the floor, falling again to the flagstones. This continued for about a minute.

At last the assassin was led in again, with his head down, and his hands bound behind him. He again looked fixedly at the sketch of the murder, seemed to reflect, and in a low voice, as if speaking to himself, muttered, "Who could have seen me at midnight?"

I was saved!

. . . . . .

Many years have passed since that terrible adventure. Thank God! I no longer draw silhouettes, nor paint burghermeisters' portraits. By dint of work and perseverance, I have won my place in the world, and I gain an honorable living while creating works of art, the only end to which a true artist should strive to attain. But the remembrance of the night sketch is always deeply impressed on my mind. Often, in the midst of my work, my thoughts go back to it. Then I lay down my palette and muse for hours.

How could a crime, accomplished by a man I had never seen, in a place where I had never been, be reproduced even to the least detail by my pencil.

Was it chance? No! And besides, what is chance, after all, except the effect of a cause which is beyond us.

Could Schiller have been right when he said, "The immortal soul takes no part in the rest of matter; during sleep of the body, it unfolds its radiant wings and departs, God knows where! What it does then, none can say; but inspiration often betrays the secret of its nocturnal wanderings?"

Who knows? Nature is bolder in its realities than the imagination of man in his fantasies.

There are, it seems, even burglars *fin au siècle*. Such was Mr. Forrest, the pride of his prison, whose story, related by A. Rudolph Federman in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*, is here republished in ROMANCE.

THE LEISURELY BURGLAR.

"SIR," said the warden, "perhaps you would like to see our Mr. Forrest."

"Mr. Forrest?" I inquired.

"Why, yes," he said in surprise. "Have you never heard of our Mr. Forrest? No? "Why," he continued, rubbing his hands together exultingly, "he is a man the likes of which I wager you will not find in another prison in these States!"

"You are proud of him, eh?"

"Proud of him! Proud of him! Well, now, you may believe it. Ah, I tell you, sir, he is none of your common every-day sort of scamps. No, indeed, not he! He is a gentleman, every inch of him. But you would like to see him?"

"Certainly," I answered, "if he be as interesting as you would make out."

"And more so, sir, I assure you," he said, enthusiastically.

"Where do you keep him?" I inquired.

"We set him at work in the library, and a good man he is there, too."

And leading the way he brought me to the door leading to the library. Pausing a moment, he leaned over to me and said:

"Sir, if you can, you must get him to tell you of his last piece of work. A very artistic thing it was, and bold, too. He's in for five years."

And he opened the door. Sitting at a table reading some paper was a very pleasant, affable-looking gentleman. When I say gentleman, I mean that he could not possibly be taken for anything else. His looks,

his bearing, the courtly manner in which he rose to greet us as we entered, and the cheery smile with which he recognized our introduction, stamped him at once as one born a gentleman; and that he was well educated and possessed of an intellect far above mediocrity was apparent before I left.

The warden leaving a moment later to attend to his duties, we spoke casually on several topics, I avoiding any mention of the fact that he was there as a prisoner, and wondering how he ever came to commit the crimes; for I had found that his last crime was not his first one, but that all his life he had been a burglar, and had, until the present time, successfully eluded the search and vigilance of the officers—which had brought him into his present position, and given him the unenviable reputation he enjoyed; for, when at last I did bring myself to the point and somewhat timidly broached the topic, his interest heightened, and, instead of appearing downcast and shamefaced, he rather bristled somewhat with pride, and I found no difficulty in inducing him to give me a detailed account of the piece of work at which he was caught. He said:

"I had abstained from any work for over half a year, owing mostly to the onerous duties imposed upon me by society; but my desire increased until I could restrain it no longer, and one night on a sudden impulse I set out, taking with me but a few tools, which I carried in my pocket. It was early, very early, not later than ten o'clock, while operations are usually most successfully conducted between three and four or five.

"However, I did not have the patience to wait, but immediately began looking about for some house whose appearance was prepossessing. By 10:30 I had found my house and fixed upon my way of ingress, which was to be at a window facing south, near the ground. I waited impatiently for the people to retire, which they did slowly.

"Finally the only person still up was a man, evidently the man of the house, who was smoking a cigar and reading a paper. I stationed myself at a tree and

waited, looking at my watch from time to time, and uttering imprecations on the man for keeping me so long in the cold—it was near winter, and some snow was already on the ground.

"Soon I saw that the man was getting sleepy, and finally, with a yawn, he threw away his cigar, laid down his paper, and taking his lamp with him, went to another room. Changing my position, I saw the light reappear on the west side, he having, to the best of my calculation, passed through a room adjoining the room where he first was, and from that into his bedroom. Soon the light went out, and, waiting about half an hour for him to get drowsy, I went to work.

"I had no trouble with the window, and, opening it lightly, crawled into the room. Right ahead of me I saw a stove, by the light of which I saw that I was in a little recess used for the placing of flowers, which had now been removed. As it was yet much too early to begin work, I sat down on a chair which I found conveniently near and waited. The room was comfortably warm, the fire giving a cheery glow, and I soon found myself growing drowsy. Remembering the cigars my host was smoking, I went to the table, and to my delight found thereon a box, some of which I immediately appropriated. They proved to be a very good smoke, and I contentedly resumed my former occupation of gazing at the coals. As fast as one cigar was used up I would light another, and I believe that I must have smoked some twenty or thirty cigars that night. And to that, and to that only, can I attribute the fact of my being here. But that comes later.

"As I sat there noises on the street grew less and less, and soon all was silent except the ticking of a clock in the room in which I was sitting. I heard the old timekeeper strike twelve in low, sombre tones, and then one. I began to be interested in the beat of the pendulum, and unconsciously constructed rhymes that I repeated to myself. Then I noticed that every few minutes it would lose a beat, followed by two close together, then lose another. As the time went on this

irregularity increased, and I came to the conclusion that my host had forgotten to wind his clock.

"As I had already acquired an affection for it, I went up to the mantel on which it stood, and opening the door, felt inside for the key. This I soon found and began winding, the noise of which caused echoes to ring over the whole room. However, I was not to be deterred, and finished my self-imposed task and again sat down.

"The fire was getting low and the room chilly, and I thought I might as well proceed to business. Taking a little bull's-eye from my pocket, I lighted it and looked about the room. Nothing there that I wanted. There were six doors leading into it, and these I tried. The first one led to the kitchen, the second to the sitting-room, the third to the cellar, the fourth to the pantry, the fifth to the upper part of the house, and the sixth, through which my host had gone, was locked.

"The key was left in the hole, and taking out my pinchers I opened it and looked into what was evidently the parlor. Going in, at the further end of the room was a door to the right, and peering into this, I gazed upon the head of the house snoring like a good fellow. I took up his pants and rifled them, getting about fifty dollars. Seeing a sort of a box at the foot of the bed, I tried that, but it refused to open. After some delay I got it open and looked over its contents. There was only one thing there I wanted, and that was an old-fashioned portmanteau, which was locked. I slit this open with my knife and found a comfortable roll of bills—about three hundred dollars. You see, I had been very lucky. In fact, I always have been, never entering a house but what I made enough to pay expenses.

"After hunting through the bureau, in which I found nothing worth confiscating except a clean collar—mine was dirty, and I changed it for a clean one which just fitted me—I left for the other wing of the house. Here I found a number of females, and, not wishing to disturb them, I returned to the dining-room and looked

about for the silver. Although I searched assiduously, I could find none and went upstairs.

"At the head of the stairs was a little hallway, running north and south, and entering the first room at the right, I looked upon the sleeping countenance of the eldest son—I guess. I went through him to the extent of fifty dollars, and going out and relocking the door, I made my way to the other rooms, all of which I found to be unoccupied. The last room I entered was very cozily furnished, and I sat down on the bed a moment to rest.

"Well," he resumed, "I don't know how it was. I suppose I was struck by the brilliant thought that I would take a little rest before I went, so I undressed and went to bed. When I awoke I found a nice little coterie of officers in my room, and I was pleasantly requested to resume my habiliments and take a walk with them, which I did to their satisfaction. When I ended I was in a place for the detention of criminals, and a few weeks later found myself in my present commodious quarters, where I will probably stay some time, for I am informed that when my present sentence has expired a new charge will be brought up, and after that another, and so on for I don't know how long."

A gentleman in a railway car bent over to his neighbor. "Would you kindly put down your window?" he said. "I have just come into ten thousand a year, and would like to preserve my health." In an incidental manner the following story, which M. E. B. has translated for ROMANCE from the French of Camille Dubains, recalls the sensible traveller, but no further inferences may be drawn.

THE THREE FRIENDS; OR, MONSIEUR VINCENT'S BRIGHT IDEA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF CAMILLE DUBAINS BY M. E. B.

THREE gentlemen were dining in a private room of the Café Anglais. They were earnest, conscientious eaters,—their nostrils distended, taking in the delicious aroma of the viands,—their eyes in repose, while their jaws were actively engaged in devouring the superb truffled capon set before them.

The solemn silence of the room was broken now and then by a murmured word, the click of the knives and forks, and the kiss of the crystal glasses as they touched the lips of the rare old bottles of wine. When the capon had disappeared, one of them, Monsieur Vincent, asked, "What do you think of my proposition?" "Magnificent," declared his friend Guigement. "Ideal," said Saint Estere. These laconic answers were followed by a pause during which the Bordeaux flowed down their throats with exhilarating effect. Then Vincent resumed, "We are bound by a friendship nothing on earth can shake. You, Guigement, saved my life."

"For which you have more than repaid me," replied the other.

"And you, Saint Estere, have never let an occasion go by for proving your courage and devotion."

"That was easy enough, when you always set me the example."

"In short," continued Vincent, "we are sincere, indefatigable friends, in life, or in death. Any man might be proud of such friendship as yours."

"As yours," echoed Guigement and Saint Estère in the same breath.

An impulse of the heart, to which the Chateau Yquem may have lent additional warmth, caused the friends to rise and grasp hands in a loyal and energetic manner over the remains of the fat capon. After a few moments, silence to allow this excess of feeling to subside, Vincent continued,

"Death alone can part us."

"Not even that," said Guigement, who was more sentimental than the others, with tears in his eyes. "Yes, I recognize the probability that Death may part us," said Vincent, "but thanks to my plan, we will prove our friendship even after death.—We are all three of us bachelors, are we not? Have you any relatives, Saint Estere?"

"God knows—I don't."

"And you, Guigement?"

"None that I am aware of."

"As for me, there are three or four persons who claim to be connected with me by family ties. I respect their claim, as I am a liberal man, but that is all; I shall do no more. They shall not change my plans in the least."

"Nor mine," echoed the other two. Some more effusive demonstrations, after which Guigement rose up and proposed the following toast, "A long life to you, gentlemen. Heaven grant you may both survive me."

"Oh, no," exclaimed Vincent; "I shall be the first to depart; you know I am threatened with diabetes."

"Do not say that," said Saint Estere; "I put in my claim, and with more reason; as you both know, I am suffering from that old gun-shot wound."

This generous competition, however, did not prevent the friends from eating their dessert, drinking their coffee, sipping their Chartreuse, and enjoying their cigars. Finally they got up to leave. Before parting,

Saint Estere proposed they should meet every year at the same hour, in the same place,—adopted. Under no pretence to fail in this engagement; whether in the centre of Africa, Australia, or Kamtschatka, they must start in time to find themselves on the threshold of the Café Anglais every 23d of May at seven o'clock. "We swear it," they all exclaimed, "on our sacred honor."

Then the three friends tenderly embraced each other and parted; Guigement's vest was wet with tears. The next morning they met at a lawyer's office to carry out Monsieur Vincent's proposition—namely, to execute a deed willing their entire fortunes at their death to each other. They also had their lives insured for ten thousand francs for the benefit of the last survivor. The deed was signed, they again embraced with fervor, and everybody could see their friendship was unparalleled.

Vincent was forty-six, Guigement forty-nine, and Saint Estere, who acknowledged to thirty-eight, was forty-five. They had up to this time enjoyed most excellent health; heat, cold, epidemics, nor imprudence, had ever affected them. A fever was something they had the vaguest idea of,—a chill was an unknown quantity,—headache a chimera,—rheumatism the invention of some wily doctor,—and gout appeared on the distant horizon of old age through a mist of champagne, capons, and truffles. Nevertheless, four months after this, Saint Estere had a very sore throat. "Hello," he said, "am I really going to be ill? That's queer." And he became very thoughtful. Six months later, Guigement perceived that he was growing daily and hourly more feeble. And Vincent woke up one morning with an aching head, aching limbs, feeling completely used up. "Ah," he cried, "am I to be the first one to depart? Well, I can't say I am glad; still, I will not complain. If it were a question of having my head cracked to save them, I would not hesitate a moment. But it is no crime to love life. Why shouldn't I live as long as they? It is true Saint Estere bears a cruel wound, given him by that scoundrel in that ugly duel, and Guigement told me the men of his family

never lived to be over sixty. Now, Heaven knows, I am far from wishing their death, still I will consult a doctor all the same." He found that Saint Estere had also interviewed one of the Faculty, and these Professional Curers found many ailments in them hitherto unsuspected. The truth is, they had never paid any attention to these little things, and would not now if it had not been for that cursed insurance waiting for the last survivor.

As health returned, these gloomy thoughts left them, and they found themselves once more, at the end of the year, in the same room, as gay, as hungry, and as sincerely devoted to each other as ever. The capon, the truffles, and Chateau Yquem shared the same fate as of yore, but somehow their stomachs slightly rebelled. They drank less wine, their brains were heavier, their hearts more easily touched; Guigement was actually whimpering before they reached the dessert.

Next morning Vincent had a serious indigestion, a little fever set in, and the poor man was admonished that his stomach was not equal to the truffles he had consumed. He was so little accustomed to suffering he imagined he was at death's door. "What am I to think of this sudden illness?" he muttered. "A man eats truffles every day without being ill; there is something in this." In a lower tone, he continued, "I have read in the police reports—— Heavens! what am I going to imagine? I must be crazy,—a man like Guigement, who saved my life—yes, but he was not my heir then; still, I do not accuse him. There's Saint Estere; a man who is not afraid of killing a fellow-creature in a duel might—— Oh, how my stomach hurts me—suppose they both had a hand in poisoning me. I will denounce them before I die,—they shall both be guillotined. But what good would that do me? I should be dead."

The queerest part of the business was that Guigement and Saint Estere were equally sick. It may be they had eaten too much, after six months of careful dieting—no matter, they both experienced the same symptoms as their friend.

Saint Estere was greatly troubled; "There is something wrong in this affair. I never felt ill until after I signed that fatal paper. Guigement has certainly laid himself open to suspicion. It was he who proposed that mutual insurance, and to think we were stupid enough to fall into the trap; and yet I am not quite certain that Vincent is not the culprit."

Well, copious draughts of tea and strict dieting soon set them on their legs again. They met a few days after, but neither disclosed what had occurred. They greeted each other with great affection, pretended the utmost nonchalance, in order that the one they inwardly pronounced their murderer (whichever it might be) should know his odious attempt had failed.

For a whole year, by a sort of tacit understanding, they avoided each other,—never dined together, never met if they could help it. Still this did not prevent them from having several attacks of gout, indigestion, and so forth. And every time they were compelled to keep their rooms Heaven only knows what horrible thoughts entered their brains.

The second anniversary of the 23d of May came round. At the appointed hour no one had arrived. Saint Estere was the first to put in his appearance. A quarter of an hour later, Guigement entered the restaurant and inquired for his friends. Ten minutes after, Vincent turned up, excusing himself for being late. They sat down to the table. How different from the joyous comrades of old! How different from the lusty fellows who in convivial tones saluted Vincent's proposition with "Magnificent," "Ideal." They had all three grown considerably thinner, their eyes were lustreless, their brows wrinkled, their cheeks flabby, and lips pale; and their laughter, their hearty, sonorous laughter, was only a memory of the past. However, they tried to work themselves up to the enthusiasm of former dinners. In vain; suspicion, like a serpent, lay coiled beneath the table and stifled all their jokes. Guigement would not touch the soup until his friends, or rather his ex-friends, had helped themselves, and when Saint Estere

was cutting a piece of bread Vincent could not help thinking of the famous Borgia knife—poisoned only on one side. In short, the poor wretches did not dare to eat. Capon and truffles remained untouched. They fell back on the wine the waiter opened before them; naturally they got abominably drunk, so drunk they were very sick next day.

Imagine their anxiety.

From that day a kind of frantic terror possessed them. Everything that happened was a source of misery. Vincent attended to his own marketing, and before buying anything plied the tradespeople with the most curious questions. Saint Estere never went out until after dark, and dined every day at a different restaurant.

As for Guigement, he dismissed his valet because he was acquainted with his two friends, and replaced him by a female cook, who had entire charge of his meals. But one day, prying about in the kitchen during her absence, he discovered a paper containing some white powder; he pounced upon it, seized his hat, dashed out, and fell like an aerolite on the first chemist's shop he saw, thrust the powder under the man's nose, and asked in a choking voice, "What is that?" The chemist tasted the stuff, and quietly answered, "Arsenic." "Great God! I knew it," gasped Guigement, rushing to the door. "He is crazy," said the chemist. Guigement ascended his stairs in three bounds, rushed to the kitchen, and brandishing his paper, shrieked, "Deny it, if you dare, you wretch—murderer—assassin!"

"Deny what?" said the woman in still louder tones—"deny what?"

"Deny that this is arsenic."

"No, I do not deny it. What of it?"

"Well, this is pleasant, upon my word,—her 'What of it'; You wretch, do you know this is poison?"

"Yes, for rats; do you think I didn't know it?"

"For rats, and for human beings," shouted Guigement; "you know Vincent—he has bribed you, promised you a thousand francs of that insurance money,—you are his accomplice,—I am going straight to the Com-

missioner of Police to denounce you." Frightened out of her wits, the cook shrieked, "Help! help!

The neighbors came to the rescue. Guigement, outraged and exasperated, wanted to send for the police immediately. However, they finally succeeded in quieting him, in making him understand that one may have arsenic in the kitchen without the slightest intention of murder.

The cook was afraid of rats—there were swarms of them in the cellar—hence the arsenic.

Guigement had not the courage to live such a life any longer. "It is unbearable," he said; "I am pale, haggard, and thin as a match. I spend my days shivering with fear and excitement, my nights in dreams that Vincent and Saint Estere are cooking on my stomach, or forcing some horrible compound down my throat. I can stand it no longer; without telling any one, I will depart to-morrow for Japan, and if necessary, will travel around the world until I end my—no, their days; I am determined to outlive them."

A month later he had weathered Cape Aden, and found himself on the Indian Ocean. His joy was so great, and he expressed it so loudly and constantly, that all the passengers thought him mad. Perhaps he was. He remained in Japan several months; his terrors were almost dispelled, when he thought,—"Suppose I go to America; that is a charming place; besides, the more money I spend the less will be left for them."

He crossed over to San Francisco, where he spent a month most delightfully, congratulating himself on the pleasure he was enjoying, and thinking that perhaps at that very moment Vincent was planning to murder Saint Estere. He had scarcely finished these reflections, when he saw a man turn the corner of the street. Great heavens! it was Vincent. Vincent also recognized him, and turned as pale—as pale as Guigement himself. "What! you here?" he exclaimed. "Yes," stammered the unhappy man, "but what are you doing in San Francisco?"

"Oh, only passing through, travelling like yourself."

There was nothing to gainsay this, so Guigement continued, "Where do you go next, my dear Vincent?"

"To Canada; if you come to Quebec in your wanderings you will find me there."

"As for me," said Guigement, "I am bound for China. When you get to Pekin, inquire for me. I will be happy to see you!"

"You sly old dog," said Vincent, feebly attempting a joke, "when everybody thinks you are safe in Paris."

Guigement in his turn tried to be jovial, but the effort was so plainly forced he deemed it best to say no more.

"I can't invite you to dine with me," said Vincent.

"Oh, no; no, thank you."

"Well, don't forget the 23d of May in your wanderings."

"No, by Jove, you may depend upon it."

They separated full of apprehensions. "He is following me, watching for an opportunity," thought Vincent. "He is hunting me down. I am sorry I didn't have a pistol," mused Guigement. "I should have rid myself of him. In this country it is a very common thing to do. Well, I think I can rest easy. He believes I am going to China; while he is hunting me there, I will make for Paris."

At the same moment Vincent was making about the same reflections. "What a turn he gave me, but it is all right now. While he is searching Canada for me, I will quietly return to France."

In the mean time, Saint Estere, unaware that his dangerous friends had left Paris, was a prey to the most exquisite anguish.

One day, when driving out, his carriage was upset by a passing omnibus. When he was picked up, his eyes were starting from his head, his hair standing on end with fright. He was convinced such an accident could never have happened in broad daylight. It was the result of some atrocious machination, an attempt upon his life. If he had only known Vincent and Guigement were wandering miles away, he would have taken the affair as a simple accident. Now he believed they had

changed their tactics. "I see their plan," he hissed through his teeth. "They want to kill me, and make it appear the work of chance."

From that day he was afraid to pass a new building, or walk under a scaffold, and if a cabman offered him his vehicle, he thought he was Vincent in disguise. Finally he kept his room almost continually. The brave, jolly, gallant Saint Estere had become a nervous old man, with head as white as snow. A man suddenly passing by him, a woman smiling upon him, caused him inexpressible terror; he started at the slightest noise, and constantly imagined some one was dogging his footsteps. He said such a life was insupportable—he was on the eve of blowing out his brains—when one day an event took place which changed the order of things.

Vincent arrived in Paris first, fully convinced that Guigement was freezing in the snows of Canada. He felt quite safe, his joy was unbounded. It is true, there was Saint Estere, but he did not fear him much,—still, he thought it better to inquire his whereabouts.

"Monsieur is in the country," answered the concierge; such had been Saint Estere's orders to him. Vincent was enchanted, smiled, rubbed his hands, and gave the concierge five francs for the good news.

"At last," he exclaimed, "I will be able to breathe for a few days,—to go to the club, the theatre, and dine at the restaurant," an ecstatic expression stealing over his face. He returned home, made an elaborate toilet, set his hat on one side of his head, flourished his stick, and walked out, happy and serene, clicking his heels on the asphalt with a bold step. He dined at his club, went to the theatre, returned about eleven o'clock to the club-room and sat down for a game of baccarat. He had scarcely begun when he heard a well-known voice behind him say, "Twenty-five louis on this counter."

"Guigement!" cried Vincent, at the same moment the other voice muttered, "Vincent!" There was a slight pause, during which great drops of perspiration beaded their brows, but this soon passed; the deception practised upon each other was too apparent,—fear gave way to

uncontrollable anger. "Wretch," cried Guigement. "Poisoner!" shrieked Vincent. "Murderer!" "Assassin!" At each complimentary epithet they drew nearer and nearer to each other, shouting and gesticulating, to the amazement of all present.

"You are the most infamous scoundrel in Paris," cried Vincent.

"By heaven, you accuse me of your own wicked deed; you were the one to suggest it."

They seized each other by the throat, shrieking insults at every breath. Finally the bystanders succeeded in separating them. "A sword, a sword!" cried Vincent. "A pistol, a sabre,—any kind of a weapon!" shouted Guigement.

At last they cooled down sufficiently to choose their seconds—they would hear of nothing but a duel to the death—and met next morning in the forest of Vincennes. Swords had been chosen. They took their places, their eyes burning, their teeth clinched; at a given signal they rushed on each other; there were a few flashes of blue steel, when they fell side by side. "Murderer!" gasped the dying Vincent. "Poisoner!" breathed Guigement with his last breath. That same evening all the Parisian papers reported the horrible duel. Saint Estere read the account, wiped his glasses, and read the astounding news again.

"Impossible! It's a dream, an hallucination. Vincent—Guigement,—both dead—dead—the scoundrels, the villains!—hallelujah! hallelujah! At last I will be able to go out, to eat, to drink. I have not had my fill for two years. I'll go right away to the Café Anglais, order a fat capon with truffles, and eat it all myself."

He walked to the restaurant, humming a merry tune; ordered a regular orgy—sat down to the table at seven o'clock. He was still there at eleven; he had devoured the whole of the capon, two bottles of Bordeaux, and three of champagne. He had to be carried from the table. Before morning the over-truffled Saint Estere died of a violent indigestion. And the three friends, united in death as in life, were all buried the same day.

The heart as an organ has lost prestige among the story-writers. Love stories are almost out of fashion. It is the liver and the brain that supply stories of hypnotism, second-sight, and eccentric types. There are still some old-fashioned people who like love stories. For these is recalled the following story, by permission, from *Putnam's Magazine.*

MRS. PROFESSOR KRAMPS.

WHY in the world little Sally Norton, the most mischievous, charming, funny, tender-hearted girl in all Portland, married Professor Kramps, of Hale College, nobody could tell. Sally was the only daughter of a moderately wealthy lawyer; her three brothers were as wild and noisy as three young colts; her mother, a very kindly, indolent, unintellectual woman, fat, rosy, and short; her father, an oddity, but an agreeable one, full of dry humor, and keen, but not bitter, sarcasm; her home was as comfortable as all the appliances of wealth and the most unrestrained freedom from laws and usages could make it. Nothing was in or out of place there; the cushions of the luxurious sofas strewed the carpet or the piazza floor as it pleased the inhabitants; the chairs stood in strange disorder and mystical groups, only to be explained by seeing them occupied, as they generally were, three at once, for the personal convenience of one tall boy.

Even Sally's specialty, the little music-room, lined with divans, and tinkling at all hours of the day with light waltzes, aerial polkas, or the choruses of negro songs, was always in confusion dire. If some stranger asked for music, every cushion was turned over to find the stray leaf; the Prima Donna Waltz had been twisted into a foolscap for a plaster head of Beethoven; "Il Segreto" made a cocked hat for a bronzed Napoleon; a sparkling German drinking song, whose words were heathen Greek to Sally (wherefore she usually adapted it to a moving ballad, called the Orphan's Sigh!) was

ironically pinned up by one of Father Mathew's medals, a practical piece of fun perpetrated by Joe Norton, the oldest and wildest of the whole set. Profiles in white chalk, and caricatures in ink, adorn the keys of the piano; and a "half-relief" done in pencil and dried mosquitoes, a pathetic representation of a July night's endurance at the seaside, hung under a rare engraving of Saint Catherine. The whole house was a little world of fun, frolic, nonsense, good temper, and disorder; and to this house, in an evil hour for his peace, came Theodosius Kramps, Greek Professor at Hale, the quietest, shyest, and most learned of men.

It was a warm July evening that introduced him to this abbey of misrule; a mutual friend to Mr. Norton tempted him from the cool cobwebs and musty volumes of the old Portland library, where he had luxuriated all that burning day, to explore the green avenues of Smith and Brown streets for the house to which he had been directed. Sooner than he hoped, by dint of capturing small boys and haranguing them in classical English with regard to streets and corners, he found his place of destination, and pleasant enough it looked in the sunset of that cloudless sky.

All about the low brick house was a wide veranda, overgrown with vines that had run at their own pleasure here and there, and now made a living scene of leaves and boughs from one pillar to another, save where "the boys," that synonym for mischief, had forced extempore doorways through the mass, by the summary method of a run and a jump. Now there were a few late clusters drooping from the tropical-looking wistaria, mixing their pale lilac blooms with the last crimson roses; every window opening on to the veranda was thrown wide; chairs stood half in and half out; a snowy shawl trailed over the sill of one long casement, and a little primrose glove, that was so little the Professor did not think it was a glove, as he eyed it in a curious maze, lay on the door-mat; and the door itself was set open, in a manner most perplexing to the orderly guest, who fumbled, and fidgeted, and wondered, and peered, a long time

before he could find the bell, and having at last succeeded, and drawn out the handle timidly, started as if the innocent brass knob had belonged to an electric machine, at the peal, not of ringing but of laughter, that instantaneously answered him; and before he could recover his poise, a door at the end of the hall swung open, and Joe Norton appeared, his handsome face flushed with fun and exercise, holding Sally perched on one shoulder, her little feet, in the funniest possible slippers, hanging helplessly from the delicate folds of her white dress, her gold curls all tangled and scattered over the rosy cheeks, and red lips parted with bursts of musical laughter, and her blue eyes brilliant with frolic and excitement; behind came Charley and Ned, pelting their darling with all manner of flowers—sturdy rosebuds that tingled against her fair throat, spice-scented carnations, scarlet lilies, and blue larkspur flowers that caught in her shining hair, and finished this charming picture with the last grace of color.

At all this the Greek professor gazed in helpless delight, with his mouth wide open but dumb; much as we depict to ourselves the angel-smitten beast of Biblical history; but alas! no prophet was there to beat him into speech. And when Sally from her elevation saw the man, "long, and lank, and brown," transfixed at the door, she was quite too natural and quite too sensitive to the ludicrous not to laugh more heartily and more merrily than ever, even while she struggled hard to escape from her brother's grasp, that she might descend and do the honors. But escape was impossible. Joe was unmoved by the beating of those small white hands about his ears, or the coaxing entreaties of that baby-like voice. "Let me down, indeed! not he," whispered Ned to Charley, "it's such fun!" and fun it was to Joe, as he advanced, with a demure face and his courtliest manner, to inquire the stranger's purpose, his discomfited burden now even rosier with shame, hiding her face in his dark curls, yet still shaking with laughter. Happily, in the very moment that Joe achieved his bow, Mr. Norton appeared, and with a very dry tone ordered

him to put his sister down, and behave himself, at which Joe executed a horrible face at the two boys, now in the range of the Professor, and choked that worthy man with the first genuine laughter that had visited his dignity for ten years. Mr. Norton caught the look and was too sympathetically affected to scold, so the whole matter ended in a burst of laughs all round, and a series of introductions, all of which Professor Kramps underwent surprisingly to himself, so much freedom, both of mind and body, is there imparted by a hearty laugh; a consideration we feelingly recommend to liberators and agitators in general.

There was no resisting the take-it-for-granted manner in which Mr. Norton kept his guest to tea, and no end to the winking and smirking of the boys at Sally, as she sat blushing and restless with suppressed mirth under the steadfast gaze of Professor Kramps, who surveyed her as if she had been some newly discovered inflection of an obsolete verb, and committed all sorts of eccentricities, such as buttering his slice of ham, pouring cream into his plate and raspberries into his tea, and gravely swallowing both mixtures with a slightly surprised aspect, that gradually became a look of resignation as he glanced again at his opposite neighbor. Sally was very pretty: an innocent mischief forever lurked in her eyes, even at their demurest; and if her red lips did not laugh, they were just ready to, perpetually.

Such a lovely little bit of womanhood had never crossed the orbit of Theodosius Kramps before; but he did not surrender at discretion, nor before fighting a long internal battle, and resisting to the last such an utter overthrow of his projects and principles. Truth to tell, Sally had him rather at advantage: that first introduction was worth a whole year of formal acquaintance and progress: the next day he was invited to dinner, and met at Mr. Norton's table some of the most distinguished men of the day, residents of Portland, with all of whom Sally seemed equally at home in her bright simplicity and irresistible fun; to all of whom

she made herself particularly fascinating. It is hardly fair to accuse so unworldly a man as Theodosius Kramps of being unduly swayed by the opinions even of his literary world; but he was, nevertheless, a man, and where a woman would have loved for love's sake, he, thinking of loving, liked to be justified in his immature preference by the tacit homage of others.

Still, he might have gone away so slightly scathed by the old Greek deity's arrow as to have forgotten the wound, had not circumstance, or some more "spiritual god," guided the dart till it struck home, and displaced even the classics from his soul, at least temporarily.

Some ten days after his first appearance at the door of Mr. Norton's house, and his peculiar reception there, he, still lingering at Portland, had asked that gentleman to call with him at the house of Professor Clay, famous in Uxbridge College, and an old classmate of Mr. Kramps. As punctual as the Rattle Street clock, he appeared at the set hour, in a carriage, at Mr. Norton's door, and was shown into the parlor, where his host directly appeared with a most rueful countenance: business had interfered; an important case was to come off in the next day's court, and at the last hour a missing witness had been traced, to whom he must personally attend; but there was an alternative, if Professor Kramps was willing: his daughter was an intimate friend of Mrs. Clay, and he would send her with him to introduce him. The Professor turned purple between diffidence and delight, and managed to stammer out that he should be most happy; so Mr. Norton left him to his own thoughts, and after due delay reappeared with Sally, looking like the veriest little daisy of the field, all sparkling with sunshine. Well it was for her bodily safety that her father helped her into the carriage, for Theodosius was brandishing his long arms hither and yon in an ecstacy of devotion charming to behold, and assuredly a touch of that little gloved hand would have wrought his delirium to an unsafe height; but, once shut up in the vehicle beside the aerially attired damsel, whose face began to dimple and glow

with mirth, he subsided into an awkward, silent creature, done up in cloth and kid, helpless and hopeless, if Sally had not understood his genus, and applied herself most devoutly to playing guide-book, "making believe" all the time that her companion was "about to say," or "had remarked" something so very apropos and piquant that he began to wonder how he could be so agreeable without knowing it. Sally's native courteousness was certainly fortified by a little bit of her father's tact and diplomacy, and by the time they reached their destination she had put Mr. Kramps so entirely at his ease that he aided her descent without any perilous awkwardness, and actually gave her his arm up the shadowy and odorous approach to the house, with no compunction or reflection on the subject; but, quite to his horror, on reaching the pretty cottage nestled in fine old trees, and catching sight of a slender figure in white attire among the flower-beds of the gay garden, Sally dropped the arm on which she had so lightly hung, and, running forward like a kitten after a ball, snatched the surprised figure round the waist and executed a spontaneous waltz down the wide gravel-path, directly toward her gaping escort.

"My dear Sally!" exclaimed the laughter-stifled voice of Mrs. Clay, as a more rapid pirouette shook down her beautiful hair from its support, and tinged her spiritual face with bloom—"don't you see there is a stranger?"

Sally stopped suddenly.

"Oh dear! I forgot—Mrs. Clay—Professor Kramps. You see, I was so glad to see Laura, sir!—" The voice was not to be resisted; Mrs. Clay laughed gently, and welcomed her *distrait* guest with so quiet and simple a manner that he was once more at ease.

Presently Professor Clay appeared, and made as much demonstration to Sally as she had to his wife, though in a more staid manner; but she was evidently a favorite, and his genial, affectionate face as he spoke made a deeper impression on one spectator than even his own cordial welcome. That was another feather to

give the arrow impulse; yet, O Theodosius! the worst was not over with thee yet!

After a long and pleasant call, Sally rose to go, and Mr. Clay attended them to the carriage; but to Sally's utter horror, as she was about to put her foot on the step, she saw beside the man who had driven them out another figure, in a strange old coat, of familiar aspect, and a hat that should have been on its nail in the garret at home, a well-known broad-brim of her deceased grandfather. Moreover, from beneath that hat peered out one eye over the coat-collar, that executed an unmistakable wink; it was, verily, her madcap brother, Joe. Suddenly as a thought flashes, the whole of his plan appeared to Sally's mind. He had discovered in the course of Mr. Kramp's conversation that he had a great terror of horses, and knew nothing about driving; and Joe, being a most expert charioteer, must have bribed the driver to let him take the reins, and give the unlucky Professor a terrible fright, where he would not dare display his fear, in the presence of a lady. It was no use for Sally to remonstrate or exclaim; neither coaxing nor entreaty would move Joe a hair's-breadth, she very well knew, and Professor Kramps would only have been twice terrified; so she held her tongue, and took her place quietly, endeavoring to hear the remarks of her companion, and reply to them, though, between expectation and vexation, she was sadly abstracted. Presently, however, the jaded horses quickened their pace; the Professor grew restless and incoherent; faster and faster flew the horses. Joe had not reckoned rightly on the Professor's pride; he was scared, simply and thoroughly scared, and no presence whatever could have prevented the expression of his fright.

In spite of Sally's entreaties that he would sit still, and her assurances that there could be no danger, he threw himself on to the front seat, rattled the sticky window in its socket, vociferated to the driver, who nodded and grinned back again, with true Irish delight, at the fun; and at last tried to force the door open and get out. This Sally could not permit him to do,

knowing it would probably be certain death; for now the joke was getting serious. The infuriated horses were beyond Joe's power to hold, and the Irishman shouted and swore in vain. At the maddest rate they careered down Rattle Street, the carriage swaying from side to side at their heels; without, Joe and his brother Phaeton pulling and shouting; within, Theodosius Kramps, Greek professor in Hale College, kicking, struggling, and sputtering alternate English and unknown tongues, in the tight embrace of Sally Norton's fat white arms, and offering so much resistance to her kindly intention, that she was quite red in the face, while, in spite of her own fear, now rapidly increasing, "a secret laughter tickled all her soul," and made her hold more doubtful every moment. But the crisis was at hand, as political gentlemen say at every election. The horses, making a straight track for their stable, took no pains to consider the institution dragging at their heels; but swerving wide, to avoid a ponderous hay-cart, dashed the carriage against a lamp-post, upset it instantly, broke pole and traces at one snap, and careered triumphantly homeward, leaving Joe and the Irishman spilt on a strip of turf that, happily for their necks, some city-pent rustic had cultivated before his door "for greens"; and, within the wreck, Theodosius Kramps with a broken leg, piteously moaning on the floor of the vehicle, and poor Sally miserably bruised, but not otherwise injured, trying to extricate herself from the door, in order to aid her companion.

Joe, however, as soon as he found himself unfractured, came to their rescue, full of remorse and shame; while, the Irishman having set off after his horses, the owner of the offending hay-cart offered his services to aid and comfort the unlucky pair. It was no easy matter to extricate the Professor from his position of pain; but Sally, forgetting her own aches, helped most tenderly and skilfully to place him on an extempore litter, and, as there were no men at hand, to carry him; and as he utterly refused to trust his neck in the power of any more horses, the only resort was to put him in the

vacant hay-cart, and so convey him to Mr. Norton's house, now but a few squares distant. Sally demurred for an instant, since it was evident she must go too; but her kindly little heart prevailed, and, mounting first into the odd conveyance, she carefully sustained the exhausted Professor's head in her arms, while Joe, on the other side, guarded the broken leg as well as he might from jolt and jar; so the singular spectacle wheeled slowly up Rattle and down Smith streets, to the great delight of all beholders, though, happily for Sally, but few of her friends ventured abroad on that sultry July evening, and she escaped comparatively unnoticed by those from whose notice she might have shrunk. Now, it was the queerest of all times and places for any sentimentality to bud, or even take root; yet in strict honesty it must be made known, that if Sally Norton ever did begin to love Professor Kramps, it was there, in that very ox-cart, all bruised and wretched as he was; for Sally was the veriest woman concocted since Eve, and no amount of wooing, done in the most approved style, could have moved her tender, simple, gentle heart so thoroughly as the genuine helplessness and suffering of the man whose head she held, from whose wide and thought-lined forehead she wiped away the damps of pain and weakness as tenderly as his mother would have kissed it.

Sally wondered why she had thought him so ugly; now his wan, transparent eyelids were closed over the burning and restless orbs beneath; his finely chiselled lips set like marble in the compression of anguish, and his dark hair, crisped with heat and moisture, falling on her own white wrist—really, he was not classically beautiful, but what the ladies call a most interesting man—and Sally's heart grew softer and softer. The head was more gently cradled, the brow wiped with a lighter finger, and the once heavy hair drawn off by a most spirit-like touch, as one hot tear rolled over the swelling eyelid, and hopped on to the bridge of Theodosius Kramp's nose, whereat he looked up and smiled, his first recognition of consciousness. Sally blushed most

exquisitely, but she couldn't put him down, and for two minutes two people were supremely blessed, bruises and bones to the contrary notwithstanding; but those two minutes brought them to Mr. Norton's door; and the whole family being strewed over the veranda, the peal of laughter which burst at once from father, mother, Charley, and Ned was too much for poor Sally. Down went the luckless head of Theodosius with a terrible bump on the cart-bottom, and out sprung Sally over the wheel, and rushed headlong upstairs to her own room, where, having locked the door, she indulged in a good cry, as becomes every young woman in the like circumstances; and then she sensibly washed her face, rubbed her black and blue shoulders with some lotion of sovereign virtue, laughed for ten minutes harder than she had cried, and went to bed like the common-sense girl she was, having just unlocked the door to admit mother, on her nightly rounds to see that all were safe in bed before she slept herself.

In the mean time the Professor, something discomfited and amazed by his sudden collapse on the stout hickory beneath, was lifted carefully out of the cart and ensconced in Mrs. Norton's best bedroom, while Ned was despatched for the family physician, and Charley sent to the hotel for his goods and chattels.

At length, seeing his guest, by dint of the penitent Joe's ceaseless efforts, safely in the hands of two M. D. 's and a "deputy sawbones," Mr. Norton commenced an unsparing inquiry into the rights of the case, and having wrung them out of Joe's remorseful lips, gave him such a pitiless and severe blowing-up (to use a technicality!) that the unhappy youth resolved directly to run away and go to sea the next morning, and was packing his carpet-bag to that effect, soon after the family dispersed for the night, when his plans were somewhat deranged by hearing, through the open window of his father's room, most unextinguishable bursts of laughter, accompanying the recital to the mother of his cross-examining Joe, and the poor fellow's dismal responses. Joe emptied his carpet-bag into the middle

of the floor, performed an Indian war-dance about the miscellaneous contents, and went to bed, where he dreamed of Theodosius Kramp's beating him unmercifully with a wooden leg.

Well, a long story becomes short when its climax is manifest. Six weeks was the Professor an inmate of Mr. Norton's house; everybody liked him, and waited on him, but nobody was like Sally. She made him incredible dainties, and served them in a way to have suited an old maid fairy. She read to him in fearfully big books, all about the dual number, and hexameters, besides a great many other things that she didn't know, and I don't either, but Mr. Kramps did. She brought him flowers, at which he gazed in ignorant delight, not knowing whether they were exponents of potatoes and beets, or herbs for the healing of man, but only that Sally held them in her fine fingers, and stood right before his eyes, "herself a fairer flower."

This dangerous state of things went on continuously,

> "Till out of long frustration of her care,
> And pensive tendance in the all-weary noons,"

and all that, Sally was quite ready to say "yes," like a good little girl, when she was asked; and in due time, on a fine day of October, as awkward as she could be made by abundance of silk and lace, she was declared Mrs. Theodosius Kramps, in proper form, and with plenty of crying, kissing, and laughter, all to the great edification of her husband, who was not possessed with that self-consciousness and false pride that make a man "detest scenes," but was himself true and genial enough to enjoy the demonstration of true and natural feeling in others; and unselfish enough to have enjoyed it because they did, had he not also shared the emotion. Sally left a lonely house behind her; Joe took refuge in the contemplation of a voyage before the mast, but at length went vehemently to studying, as he was to enter Hale College the next term, under the Professorial auspices. Mother had a hearty cry, and then settled down again to the old routine. Mr. Norton missed Sally's

daisy face most of all, now never peering over his dusty law books, or tearing him out of his best business hours into a drive, or frolic, or picnic. The younger boys were at school; they thought of Sally at home, when they stopped to think; but very rarely did their daily scrapes and exploits leave them any room for meditation. Sally herself was Aprilesque, as usual. Sometimes crying, oftener smiling, she made the journey to the Oldport a little romance to the Professor, who watched her much as if she were a bird he had unexpectedly caught, and of whose actual possession he was yet doubtful.

Once installed in her dignities, poor Sally's real life began; every day, indued in some bridal finery, she had to sit in state and receive the solemn calls of the Faculty wives; and every evening, when she longed, after such a stupid day, to pull off her little shoes and curl up in one corner of the sofa for a nice nap, or try and coax her "dear old Theo" into an ungainly gambol, in came the Faculty *per se*, one or another, and she stiffened into Mrs. Kramps, with half-suppressed yawns and frequent rubbings of her mist-blue eyes with the dimpled knuckles of hands that should have decorously reposed on her handkerchief.

But Sally could not be proper; it was not in her: how shall I give to a respectable public a mild account of her incessant misdemeanors, or tell, in moderate language, how she went out to a large dinner-party, the thirteenth given in her honor, and there, being seated between a professor of Sanscrit and a mathematical tutor, for a long time spent herself in ill-concealed efforts to keep awake, till the arrival of a little bee, that was attracted from the sunny window by her bouquet of roses, slightly diverted her thoughts, and after a long attempt to catch the winged-sting, having at last succeeded, she dropped it slyly into the Sanscrit professor's tumbler, and he, abstractedly lifting the glass to his lips, sipped the wet bee, that of course made violent struggles to escape from such a cavern, and frightened the timid man of tongues almost into a cata-

lepsy, while Sally shook with laughter at the ensuing scene?

Or will it do to acknowledge, that on the fourteenth like occasion, a species of mass Faculty meeting, the whole body of *literati*, ascending to the drawing-room, found Sally "making cheeses" for the great delight of a child unluckily present, and the horror of a circle of sober-suited matrons, whose spectacles gleamed with dignity and resentment at the pretty and piquant picture, Sally's fair head and rounded shoulders set in the vast and puffed-up circumference of her deep blue brocade skirt, as she had skilfully achieved a most wonderful "cheese" after a light waltz to inflate the airy mimicry? The gentlemen were charmed, being sensible, as I am bound to acknowledge men are apt to be, that there is something in truth and nature infinitely captivating and refreshing; but Theodosius was struck with consternation, and his old aunt, Rebecca Kramps, came as near using profane speech as her piety and politeness together would permit. Poor Sally!

However, this was not all; the advent of Joe at Hale College, and his speedy discovery there of a cousin in the senior class, just his double for mischief and merriment, gave Sally a fresh impetus. Paul Norton and Joe were at the yellow house on Avenue B six times a week, often seven. The Professor, deep in his Greek and German, far away from the parlor, which rang continually with laughter and shouts of mirth, paid no heed to the gay echoes which now and then reached him, more than to smile abstractedly, and be glad Sally was so happy. As spring came on, however, and Paul Norton, more than half in love with his lovely and merry cousin, volunteered his escort for drives and picnics, utterly abhorrent to the professorial soul, the good Theodosius began to grow wearily lonely, and to long, even in his beloved study, for those brilliant sparks of fun that floated no more through the still house and to long especially for his mocking-bird, at the hours he had used to give to her society. Rumors of no flattering nature to Sally's sense of propriety crept

about the provincial circles of Oldport. All the Faculty wives treated her with profound politeness, and glared upon her with distrustful eyes at any social encounters. But Sally, in her bright, brave innocence, and in her true heart, daily strengthened in its growing love for her husband, and more nobly fortified by her pride in his talent and reputation, cared little for the coldness of anybody. She rode, sung, and frolicked to her heart's content, and thought nothing of "they say"; but Aunt Rebecca brought it all to Theodosius, and would have done so to his wife, had he not strictly forbidden her to retail one word of such scandal in Sally's hearing: so Miss Kramps had to content herself with wonderful eye-exercises, and a rigid expression of virtuous indignation that made her nose ache half an hour afterwards, so being its own reward.

Yet even these spinster shafts fell harmless upon Sally, till one day, or rather one night, the Professor having gone to a Faculty meeting, Sally and her faithful allies, with the aid of a few gay young girls, who had come in accidentally, amused themselves with charades, always well got up, and most spirited, where Sally took the lead; for under her merriment there lay a deep vein of talent and strong sense, as yet hidden, but no less genuine. In the midst of a great burst of laughter at Sally's appearance in the cap and shawl of an old woman, a skein of yarn doing duty as white hair, and her husband's spectacles on her funny little nose, the door opened, and into the *melée* walked the Professor, bringing with him a very distinguished foreigner, famous the world over as one of the lights of science. Joe roared inwardly in the corner; Paul stepped forward to shake hands with his cousin-in-law; and Sally, all forgetful of her costume, came behind him with her usual simple and well-bred manner to welcome her husband's friend. Well might the Frenchman's thin lip curl to a perceptible sneer at the figure before him, which, being perceived by Joe, the unlucky boy rushed forward, and pulling off Sally's cap, to which also were attached the spectacles, pulled her golden hair down

beside, and created a sudden change in the face of Professor Malpas, as well as in Sally's; for now the Frenchman, with unequivocal admiration, turned to poor, ashamed, yet a vexed Theodosius—

"Ah! you have one eldest daughter, sir, I see. I give you mirth; she is vair pretty indeed!"

A sudden pang went through Professor Kramp's soul.

"Monsieur Malpas," replied he, "this is my wife, Mrs. Kramps."

"Oh! ah! pardon me."

The foreign professor had regained the sneer. Theodosius drew himself up, erect and pale; he looked for once like the man he was, and Paul Norton stared.

"Mrs. Kramps!" said the Professor, "will you order supper? Monsieur Malpas has just arrived in the cars, and will remain with us."

At this moment a very distinct sniff was audible, and the malign face of Rebecca peered in at the door, and retreated with an equally malign giggle, murmuring—"Oh! I disturb your theatricals, I perceive." This time, Sally felt her sting keenly; but she had to hide her grieved face like the chidden child she was, and go. When she returned, her dress was carefully arranged, and the other guests taking leave, she sat down to converse with Professor Malpas; and having been most carefully taught French—a language, indeed, for which her traits seemed peculiarly adapted—she made her unexpected visitor thoroughly and pleasantly at home before the well-ordered and neatly served supper appeared. Yet this was only the first cloud of Sally's sunshine, soon coaxed from the knit brows of her husband by soft lips, and the touch of a wet eyelash: a new round of invitations, on their guest's account, brought Sally out once more into the circle of the college and its dependencies.

There she met a lady, just now a star in the ascendant among surrounding *literati*, and the most opposite creature possible to little Madame Kramps. Miss Veron was tall, intellectual, and high-strung: not pretty, but striking; in air and manner, most charming

to the Faculty; full of a graceful and courtly dignity; a certain stereotyped ease of manner, the perfection of training and *savoir faire*. To her the learned and shy Theodosius introduced his little wife, and devoted his greater self. He hung upon her steps like a caricature shadow; conversed with her hour after hour, entranced, as it seemed, by her wit and wisdom; and entertained his wife at all intervals with Miss Vernon's bon-mots and learning, till into Sally's innocent breast began to penetrate the agony of all mortal love, a bitter thorn of the red rose, a spark of jealousy.

She began to grow quiet and meek; the damask-colored cheek faded to the tenderest wilding hue; her blue eyes drooped so sadly that Paul Norton ground his teeth and shook his fist at the Professor every time he met him in the dark, till a sudden idea, to the effect that Sally was pining away for himself, struck the exalted mind of the Senior, and he abstained, like any Spartan martyr, from visiting at the house more than once a fortnight, and put himself on a course of Bulwer's novels; all of which was very good in him, though quite unnecessary.

Now it happened that there came to town about this time a certain old bachelor uncle of Sally's, the most thorough type of his species possible, and to him Rebecca Kramps, in a paroxysm of satisfactory malice, made a statement of all the spite she had nursed so long against the girl-wife of her nephew; and Mr. Claudius Norton, in a stiff rage, vowed sudden vengeance, tied his white cravat in a frightfully rectangular manner, and betook himself to dinner at Professor Kramp's to meet Miss Vernon and four professors with their wives, beside President Lyndhurst without a wife, that lady being "absent from" for the best of reasons—that the President had never found her, but was a happy bachelor of high degree and a whole alphabet of honors, moreover a school and college friend of Mr. Kramps. With Sally at her own table, Uncle Claudius found no fault; to be sure, he put on a grim and mummy-like aspect at a little badinage she ventured to exchange

with Mr. Lyndhurst; but when the guests were gone, the Professor in his study, and Claudius alone beside the fire with Sally, his wrath burst forth, and he harangued the weary child full half an hour on the levity and freedom of her conduct, and the duty she owed her husband, with a score of sarcastic and malignant allusions added thereunto.

At first, weak and tired, Sally listened in helpless silence; but, as a few little parallels skilfully drawn between herself and Miss Vernon woke the keen sting of a long rankling pain, Sally flushed with scarlet, and spoke herself.

"Uncle," said she, "I don't think you ought to say what you do. I am sure I would not hurt any one's feelings for a world. I laugh and jest because I like to; it amuses people, and helps me to talk. I know there is no harm in it!"

"If you were my daughter, Sally," bitterly replied Uncle Claudius, "I should send you directly from the room at such an exhibition: it is totally unfeminine and undignified. I would permit no woman to do so in my house, I assure you!"

At this tirade from a man who could not comprehend the dignity of a pure and simple heart, or appreciate the divine and sparkling grace of nature beside the tinsel of convention, poor Sally, taught to reverence age and relationship, burned with a sense of the deepest pain and injustice, where an older and more self-esteeming woman would have laughed and despised.

"I am not your daughter, sir!" retorted she, "nor do I think that I deserve what you say. I am innocent to myself, and that shall suffice me. I must request you to excuse me for to-night!"

With a little air of queenliness, that to an uninterested observer might have been funny, but was only astounding to Claudius, Mrs. Kramps passed out of the room, majestically walked upstairs, threw herself on the bed, and cried till a half-delirious sleep overpowered every sense, and the Professor found her at midnight senseless to his tenderest words, her fair face burning scarlet,

her hair all tossed and dishevelled upon the delicate dress she had not yet removed. Poor Sally! she was ill enough by morning: her harassed thoughts, her long and silent hours of wakefulness; her terror of Miss Vernon's influence over Theodosius; her tedious self-questioning,—were all visited now upon the tender physical nature unused to such a conflict with its master power.

She grew worse and worse; raved about everything she had kept in her tired heart so long, and enlightened Theodosius to an extent incredible to himself. Mrs. Norton came to nurse her darling: the Faculty wives sent in every species of edible, as if a brain fever consumed jellies and soups like a new Wantley dragon. Miss Vernon's real womanly nature melted the pride above it, and she implored leave to watch with Sally; but the patient's delirium heightened at the mere sound of her voice, and courteously ascribing this to Miss Vernon's recent acquaintance and comparative strangeness, Mrs. Norton took it upon herself to decline her aid.

As for Uncle Claudius, he departed for his own place, as Mr. Kingsley diplomatically says of doubtful characters. Only our friend went by rail, with a carpet-bag, pursued, in fact, by a sort of blind remorse, and eschewing the sight of Rebecca Kramps, who had in vain curled her wig, and set her bonnet at him, six long weeks. Now, she took vast comfort in rolling her eyes, like the proverbial duck rendered desperate by electricity, and declaring this illness to be a judgment on Sally for her light-mindedness—a visitation certainly unknown to Rebecca, whose mind might have been an heirloom from the dark ages—could it be supposed any one would take the trouble of handing down so infinitesimal a possession.

After a long season of doubts and doctors, melancholy and reducing, in the extreme, to Professor Kramps—who wore a little footpath directly in the middle of the stair carpet, going up and down for Sally's good and his own relief of mind—the poor child became conscious, and smiled at Theodosius—a real, living, lovely, wan

simle—whereat the Professor fell on his knees and kissed the coverlet, giving the devoutest inward thanks in his secret heart that this very sweetest gift of God was again given to him, and making a vow to be more tender and more careful than ever, for his heart smote him even in that hour, remembering Sally's unconscious betrayal of her quietly endured sorrow and distrust of his love. A few days after, his wife having rapidly strengthened, Professor Kramps lifted her on to a pile of soft cushions, and opened the window at her side, for her to hear the swell of an organ, borne across the warm August air upon a scented wind.

"It is in Trinity Church!" said Sally.

"Yes, dear; and what do you think is going on there?"

"A wedding," proposed the languid voice.

"But whose, my little wife?"

"Tell me, Theo; I am too tired to guess."

"Lyndhurst and Miss Vernon, Sally."

A bright flush of shamefaced joy suffused Sally's wasted cheek. She turned to her husband, and drew his head nearer with her two thin, white hands:

"Theodosius! did you know it all the time?"

"Yes, Sally; that was why I wanted you to know her well. I tried to tell you once or twice, but you never seemed to like to talk about Miss Vernon."

A little cadence in the tone betrayed him. Sally's shining head drooped lower and lower.

"Dear Sally, forget it all. I, too, was—at least—I can't say I am sorry Paul Norton graduated last month."

"Oh, Theodosius!'

A little grimace met the indignant look and tone. Sally was beaten at her own weapons; she laughed her strength all away, and when at last her husband said, in that same serio-comic tone,

"Don't you think we are well matched, Sally?" she could laugh no longer; a few helpless, childlike tears replied.

The long convalescence did Sally no injury; in its shade and stillness she learned and applied many lessons on the eternal fitness of things. The grain of

truth in Claudius Norton's chaff-heap, having fallen on good ground, took root; she had been well tested in the severest of crucibles, the actual agony of life, and the metal rang clear. Mrs. Professor Kramps, thereafter, filled her place in Oldport with serene poise and self-possession, like the lovely and gracious woman that she was. Time brought efficient aid to her patient endeavor. Soon there came little fingers, that stole away her childish things; tiny feet danced her dances; sweet child's laughter, with no echo, unconsciously mimicked her own mad mirth of old days, and in the loveliness of love, a mother and a wife, she became a woman, owning, at this hour, no better or firmer friend than Mrs. Lyndhurst, whose own children have awakened her child-heart again, and taught her to reverence its power and presence, disciplined as it is in Mrs. Professor Kramps.

A play by the author of "The Voyage of M. Perichon" needs no commendation. "The Love of Art," slight as it is, bears the same mark of gay whimsicality that has made classic the more important plays of Labiche. It has been translated for the entertainment of the readers of ROMANCE.

THE LOVE OF ART.

SCENE.

A parlor; a mantel-piece with a clock and two vases on it. A window, two doors, a writing-desk, open. Chairs and a wood-box.

Dramatis Personæ.

MRS. EGLANTINE MARSHALL.
SARAH, a maid.
ANTHONY, butler.

[Sarah *above looking out of the window.*]

SARAH—What a splendid-looking creature our new butler is! He's a perfect gentleman. I've been watching him cutting wood, out of the window. I'll declare, he's putting on gloves! Poor fellow, his hands must be cold.

[Mrs. Marshall *enters.*]

MRS. M.—Sarah, what are you doing?

SARAH [*brazenly*]—Cleaning the hearth, ma'am.

MRS. M.—Have you been to the dressmaker?

SARAH.—Yes'm; and I told her if she knew what was good for her she'd have that dress here at four o'clock.

MRS. M.—That was right; I may get it by six.

SARAH—Mrs. Marshall, I'd like to ask you a question.

MRS. M.—Well, speak.

SARAH—Why did you have two dresses made for one ball?

MRS. M. [*laughs*]—You wonder why? It's a little scheme of mine. I'll tell you, Sarah. Mrs. Hugh

Copcut will copy my gowns, and I've determined to circumvent her.

SARAH [*to herself*]—Circumvent her?

MRS. M.—When I order a new gown she goes to my dressmaker and gets her to make her one just like it.

SARAH [*approvingly*]—And you're on to her.

MRS. M.—Eh? If I wear blue, in she comes in blue. If I am in pink, there she is in pink. Only yesterday she said to me, "Why, we might be twins." It is insupportable. Now I put brains in my clothes. Everything is thought out carefully.

SARAH [*sympathetically*]—You make yourself perfectly sick about them.

MRS. M.—Scarcely that, Sarah, but I study, design, invent, and Mrs. Copcut, who hasn't an idea of her own, copies. It is really very exasperating. But this is what I have done: Some time ago I ordered a new gown for this ball—green and yellow—something horrible. I had parsley omelet in my mind. An hour after Mrs. Copcut ordered one just like it.

SARAH—Just like her.

MRS. M.—But since then I've gone to another woman and had her make me a gown I planned myself—throat of a wounded pigeon, in a style that suits me perfectly. It will be delicious. Now, I want to go early enough to see Mrs. Copcut enter.

SARAH—To see the omelet come in.

MRS. M.—The fun will be worth while. By the way, what is the new man doing?

SARAH—Bringing up wood. I'm sure he has a good character.

MRS. M.—As to that I went to inquire myself. The servant stupidly ushered me into a room where a gentleman was taking a foot-bath.

SARAH—Goodness gracious!

MRS. M.—Oh, he was behind a screen. I bowed to the screen. "Sir," I said, "I have come to inquire about a former servant." A voice answered: "Excuse me, lady, I have a tendency to apoplexy, and I am obliged to take a mustard foot-bath for fifteen min-

utes." "I am very sorry." "No sorrier than I am, lady. The days I don't take a foot-bath I have to have leeches on my neck. This is the day for the foot-bath. To-morrow I'll have leeches." "Pardon me, sir, I've come to ask you about a servant." "About Anthony Pettingill? He's a good fellow—"

SARAH.—I'll warrant.

MRS. M.—"Very ignorant."

SARAH.—You don't say so.

MRS. M.—"Very careless, clumsy; breaks everything. But he belongs to the organization. He votes with me"—that was what he said. "But he has one fault—he drinks; but excuse me, the fifteen minutes are up. I'll write you and send you his photograph."

SARAH.—His photograph?

MRS. M.—So he said. I bowed adieu to the screen and came away, not much wiser concerning the new man.

SARAH.—I'm sure you are going to like him. He writes a good hand. I saw him this morning helping cook with her accounts.

MRS. M.—That recalls to me [*goes to the table*] that I must write to Aunt Grace and thank her for those vases she sent me on my birthday. What do you think of them, Sarah?

SARAH.—I think they're just elegant.

MRS. M.—Sarah, they're frightful.

SARAH.—That was what I was going to say.

MRS. M.—Poor aunt. I think she must have bought them on Grand Street. Never mind! sooner or later somebody will break them, and I shall not be grieved. (*Sits down and begins to write:*] "My dear aunt, I have received the vases; they are ravishing." [*She continues to write.*]

[Anthony *enters with a load of wood. He wears livery, a moustache and gloves.*]

ANTHONY [*to Sarah*]—Where will I put it?

SARAH.—In the wood-box. [*Tries to be coquettish.*] There, goosey!

ANTHONY.—Hurry. I have another load to bring up.

MRS. M. [*to herself*]—Does apologize have two p's?

ANTHONY [*goes toward her with the wood in his arms*]—One only, Mrs. Marshall. In apologize p is not repeated.

MRS. M. [*Astonished*]—Oh! this is Anthony Pettingill. Anthony, yesterday I went to look up your recommendations; they are very satisfactory. You are a good fellow, but ignorant.

ANTHONY—Ah!

MRS. M.—Careless, clumsy, but I like your politics.

ANTHONY—The representatives of the people I have always—

MRS. M.—Yes, very well. But you have one fault—you drink.

ANTHONY—Drink. I?—

MRS. M.—Listen. I don't like that, nor your moustache. It must come off.

ANTHONY—Oh, but, Mrs. Marshall, my moustache.

MRS. M.—Certainly; a butler with a moustache is impossible. You must cut it to-day, this evening.

ANTHONY—I will sacrifice it.

SARAH—What a pity!

MRS. M.—Now put down your wood and leave me to finish my letter. [*She begins to write.*]

ANTHONY [*to Sarah, who helps him with the wood*]—She is very severe.

SARAH—Oh, she's all right. Don't say anything. I will help you to save your moustache.

MRS. M. [*writing*]—"Sister Emma has returned from King's Mountain." [*To herself:*] Is it in Virginia?

ANTHONY—In North Carolina, Mrs. Marshall, the battle of King's Mountain was fought.

MRS. M. [*astounded*]—What is that? How do you know that?

ANTHONY—I came from that State, Mrs. Marshall.

MRS. M.—Ah! That accounts. [*Goes on writing.*]

SARAH—Isn't that funny?

ANTHONY—What?

SARAH—I once knew a man from that State, and

he married right here in New York. They are very happy.

ANTHONY—That is very interesting.

MRS. M. [*folding up her letter*]—Now for the address. "Mrs. Grace Forbes, Nantuit." [*Absently.*] Is it in Rhode Island?

ANTHONY [*goes to her*]—Nantuit is in Massachusetts, on Cape Cod. Summer population—

SARAH [*Throws up her hands*]—He knows everything.

MRS. M. [*aside*]—This isn't a butler, it's an encyclopedia. [*To Anthony.*] Now, go bring up the rest of the wood. [*Exit Anthony.*] In a servant it is astonishing. Anthony is very strong in his geography, isn't he, Sarah?

SARAH—Yes, but he speaks very bad English.

MRS. M.—What did he say?

SARAH—This morning he showed cook a lot of plums. "Those sorts I like," he said. Those sorts! [*laughs.*]

MRS. M.—Haven't you noticed something peculiar about him?

SARAH—Indeed and I have. His room door was open, and just from curiosity I peeped in, and what do you think I saw?

MRS. M.—I don't know,—what?

SARAH—A dressing-gown of velvet! fancy that—a butler!

MRS. M. [*meditatively*]—It seems to me—

SARAH—And more than that,—I heard him say he was going to a manicure. Imagine that—a man!

MRS. M. [*astonished*]—A manicure!

SARAH—Yes,—a man.

[Anthony *re-enters with another load of wood.*]

MRS. M.—Silence. [*Sits at table and opens a book.*]

ANTHONY [*to himself*]—This is pretty steep, this wood carrying.

SARAH.—Wait a moment; I'll help you. [*She puts the sticks in the box.*] My, but it's warm!

ANTHONY—I'm both hot and thirsty.

SARAH—Stop. Don't say that before her.

ANTHONY—Why not?

SARAH—She wont like it.

MRS. M. [*aside*]—I will test him. [*To Sarah.*] Sarah!

SARAH—Yes, ma'am.

MRS. M.—In what year did Mazarin die?

SARAH [*astounded*]—Mazarin. What's he?

ANTHONY [*graciously, coming forward with wood still in his arms*]—In 1661, Mrs. Marshall,—1661.

MRS. M.—That isn't hard enough. And Dagobert?

ANTHONY.—In 622. [*Aside*] She can't collar me on dates.

MRS. M. [*aside*]—A butler! what does it mean? I must go to Mr. Durand and find out. I hope he will not be taking a foot-bath. No, this is the day of the leeches. [*Aloud.*] Sarah.

SARAH.—Yes'm.

MRS. M.—Go get me a cab. Hurry. [*To Anthony.*] And you—you wax the hall. You can do that.

ANTHONY—Oh, yes, of course.

MRS. M. [*aside*]—A servant who knows when Dagobert died. There must be something behind this.

[Sarah *has been out getting a scrubbing-brush for the hall. To Anthony.*] Here is your brush.

MRS. M. [*To Sarah*]—Quick, a cab, while I put on my bonnet. [*To Anthony.*] Make the floor shine.

[*She goes out at right and* Sarah *at left.*

[Anthony *is alone, scrubbing-brush in his hand; looks at his brush.*]

ANTHONY—Make the floor shine! Great Scott! And I am an artist, a painter,—George Merritry. I have passed also a civil service examination, and she thought she could trip me up on dates. I am known as a painter. To be sure, I haven't sold much, but my name is in the catalogues. I exhibited at the Academy my "Salome with the head of St. John on a platter." This year I have begun another large canvas which I mean to paint as a pendant to the Saint John. It is an

historic subject which has not been treated for some time—Judith and Holophernes. I have chosen the moment when Judith is holding up the head of Holophernes. Now I am hunting up my models. It is very difficult to get a suitable Judith. She must have the Biblical profile. She must have courage to act, yet be full of grace and modesty. How I have hunted for such a combination! I have gone to all the public balls, but could find nothing, nothing. I was about to give it up, when three days ago I was in a confectioner's and found myself face to face with my ideal, who was eating a little tart. "Heavens!" I cried to myself, "There she is, my Judith." I learned that she was a widow, and that she wanted a servant. I bought the recommendation of a fellow, Anthony Pettingill,—what a vile name! I bought some proper clothes and presented myself. I was engaged. Yesterday I cut wood; to-day I am to polish the floor. All for the love of art. Never mind, I see her, I study her. I am getting her points. [*Takes a sketch-book from his pocket.*] I have already made a little sketch. When she turns her back I draw, but it isn't easy to get a likeness. She has one fault,—she is always pleasant. She is too perpetually affable. That does not suit me. When Judith is cutting off Holo's head she must look as if she meant business. If she would only frown, draw down her eyebrows, or get a little vexed. But I'll have it yet. I will make her angry. She has a parrot. Suppose I teach it something to say—

[Sarah *enters with a bottle of wine and a glass, which she hides behind her back.*]

SARAH—Hist!

ANTHONY—What?

SARAH—Mrs. Marshall is gone; drink, quick. [*Fills a glass.*]

ANTHONY [*surprised*]—Wine?

SARAH—I know your weakness.

ANTHONY—What. my [*aside*]—Ah, yes, that of Pettingill.

SARAH—Hurry.

ANTHONY [*aside*]—I must play my part. [*He swallows the wine and makes a face.*]

SARAH—Maybe you'd rather have white wine?

ANTHONY—I have positively no choice. [*He hands the glass back.*]

SARAH [*not understanding him*]—No! not another glass.

ANTHONY—I didn't ask for one.

SARAH—Listen to me, Mr. Anthony Pettingill.

ANTHONY [*aside*]—That dreadful name!

SARAH—I can understand how a man may drink a glass of wine—two even, to make himself agreeable. That I will consent to; but I will never consent to a man, handsome, learned, elegant, giving himself up to drink.

ANTHONY—I swear.

SARAH—It is an oath. I accept it. [*Looking at him sweetly.*] And I will reward you.

ANTHONY—What?

SARAH—That is all right, Mr. Pettingill. I thank you for your sacrifice. I am touched by it—and to reward you—here is another glass. [*She pours one.*]

ANTHONY [*quickly*]—No! no!

SARAH [*handing it to him*]—I permit it. I ask it.

ANTHONY [*aside, drinking*]—Is she going to make me do this every day?

[*Voice of Mrs. Marshall in the hall.*]

MRS. M.—Sarah! Sarah!

SARAH—There she is. Brush! brush! [*She conceals the bottle behind her back.*]

[Mrs. M. *enters in evening dress.*]

MRS. M.—Well, the cab?

SARAH—I sent for it. I'll see. [*Exit Sarah.*

MRS. M.—How awkwardly he works. [*Stands and looks at him rubbing the hearth; sniffs.*] I smell wine.

ANTHONY [*aside*]—It's my chance to make her angry. I'll break something. [*With the end of his brush he knocks off a vase from the mantel. It breaks. He hastily draws out his sketch-book and looks at Mrs. Marshall.*]

MRS. M. [*laughing heartily*]—My aunt's vase. Good! I said so this morning.

ANTHONY [*aside*]—She laughs. [*Puts the book back in his pocket.*]

MRS. M. [*gaily*]—There is another. Never mind.

ANTHONY [*aside*]—She doesn't mind her crockery. I must find some other way.

SARAH [*enters*]—The cab is here, ma'am.

MRS. M. [*laughing*]—Sarah, he has broken the vase.

SARAH [*laughs*]—Broken the vase! That's good. [*They continue to laugh.*]

ANTHONY [*laughs without understanding*]—Yes. I have broken the vase. [*Aside.*] It appears I have done something funny.

SARAH—Oh, Mrs. Marshall, I forget! Here is a letter for you.

MRS. M. [*opening the letter,—aside*]—It is from Mr. Durand; he has sent me what I want to know. [*To Sarah.*] Send the cab away. I shall not go out.

SARAH—Very well, ma'am. [*Low to Anthony as she goes.*] You must break the other. [*Goes out laughing.*]

[Anthony *picks up the pieces of the vase while* Mrs. Marshall *reads the letter.*]

MRS. M. [*reading aside*]—"Madam, knowing the interest you take in my health I will inform you that I am better."—What is that to me?—[*Anthony carries out the broken vase.*] "You will find in this envelope the photograph of Anthony Pettingill."—What in the world will I do with that?—"As on principle I regard all servants as thieves until I prove them honest, it is my custom when I get a new man to have his photograph taken. Eleven I give to him, which pleases him greatly, but one I keep myself, so that I can trace him if he makes off with my silver."—Well, he is an original. [*Takes out the photograph.*]—Here it is. [*Looks at it.*] What! This isn't the man! not in the least—but—what does it mean? Then who is this person I have taken into my house? What does he want? I am terrified. Suppose he is a thief. Hold, I will put him

to the proof. I will lay a little snare. [*She takes out her purse and counts her money.*] Twenty dollars, just. [*She puts the purse on the table and rings.*]

ANTHONY [*enters*]—Mrs. Marshall.

MRS. M. [*aside, studying his face*]—No, there is no resemblance. [*Aloud.*] Put this table in order, Anthony. [*Exit Mrs. M.*

ANTHONY [*alone*]—There is no way out of it. I did break the vase and I ought to pay her for it. I certainly did not come here to destroy her property. [*Examines the vase that remains.*] I wonder what it is worth? It is native ware, and not beautiful. [*Turns it around.*] Very poor; here is the price on the bottom. Ten dollars,—how fortunate! [*Puts back the vase and takes out his pocket-book.*] Let me see. I'll give her five dollars for the one I broke. But how? I can't put it in her hand. [*Looking around him.*] What luck! She has forgotten her purse. [*He takes it and puts in it a five-dollar bill.*] There, I shall feel better satisfied.

SARAH [*enters with a bottle and a glass*]—Anthony!

ANTHONY—What?

SARAH [*showing him the bottle*]—It is white wine.

ANTHONY [*quickly*]—Ah! thanks. I am not thirsty. Besides, I gave my oath, and when I swear—

SARAH—Ah, that's very well, Mr. Anthony. There are precious few men who keep their vows.

ANTHONY—But I am one.

SARAH—I have undertaken to reform you.

ANTHONY [*aside*]—I might doubt that.

SARAH—At the same time I am not going to make you miserable. I will let you down easily.

ANTHONY—But I don't want it.

SARAH—Oh! I know what I'm about. [*Fills the glass.*] Here. I permit it—just one.

ANTHONY [*refuses*]—No, thanks.

SARAH—But it's white wine. Here, to my health. You can't refuse that.

ANTHONY [*takes the glass, aside*]—This girl makes me tired. I am not accustomed to drinking wine at all hours and seasons. [*Drinks.*] It is worse than the last.

SARAH [*with sentiment*]—That was to my health.

ANTHONY—All right; but you seem sufficiently robust.

SARAH—Quick! Mrs. Marshall. Where's your brush?

MRS. M. [*to Sarah on entering*]—Did you order the hair-dresser for this evening?

SARAH—Yes, ma'am.

MRS. M. [*looking at the table, aside*]—The purse has been tampered with. That is clear. [*Aloud.*] Sarah!

SARAH—Yes, ma'am.

MRS. M.—Go out and get a policeman.

SARAH [*explosively*]—A policeman!

MRS. M.—Do as you are told. [*Exit Sarah.*

ANTHONY [*aside, watching Mrs. Marshall*]—Always calm and smiling. I'm in despair.

MRS. M. [*taking up her purse, turns her back on Anthony and counts her money*]—Ten, twenty, five. There is more than I had. [*She looks at Anthony, now rubbing the floor vigorously.*] At least he is not a thief.

SARAH [*entering*]—That person is here.

MRS. M.—Very well. I don't want him. Tell him to go away. Sarah, go to the dressmaker's for my gown. It is four o'clock.

SARAH—All right, ma'am. [*Low to Anthony as she goes out.*] I have put the bottle and the glass behind the curtain in the vestibule.

MRS. M. [*meditatively, aside*]—A young man enters my house under another name. He is not a thief. What is he, then? Can it be he is in love with me? Such things have been. Well, if he is in love he will be jealous. I will make him betray himself. [*Aloud.*] Anthony.

ANTHONY—Yes, Mrs. Marshall.

MRS. M.—Come here. [*He approaches.*] [*Aside.*] He always smells of wine. [*Aloud.*] Anthony, I have found you a faithful, devoted servant, and I am going to give you a proof of my confidence.

ANTHONY—I will hope to deserve it.

MRS. M.—This evening I expect a visitor—a gentleman.

ANTHONY [*unmoved*]—Yes.

MRS. M.—A gentleman with dark eyes and beard—[*aside*] he doesn't budge. [*Aloud.*] It is Prince Santo-Negro—an Italian.

ANTHONY [*bows respectfully while waiting*]—Yes.

MRS. M.—I do not wish him to wait an instant at the door. He will give two quick rings, and without a word I want you to usher him into my boudoir. Why do you look so?

ANTHONY—I am not aware of looking unusual, Mrs. Marshall.

MRS. M.—This gentleman wishes to marry me, and naturally I do not want any gossip. And I [*appears unconscious of Anthony.*]—I love him; I love him. [*Observes Anthony stealthily, who does not move.*] Yes, I love him.

ANTHONY [*very calmly*]—Very well, Mrs. Marshall.

MRS. M. [*aside*]—He is perfectly insensible. Was there ever such a block of wood!

ANTHONY [*aside*]—If she loves him I can perhaps make her angry. Then for my Judith. [*Aloud.*] Mrs. Marshall, will you permit me very respectfully to tell you something.

MRS. M.—Yes, certainly. Speak.

ANTHONY—I fear you are deceived.

MRS. M.—Deceived! How?

ANTHONY—I do not wish to give you pain, but this prince of Santo-Negro—

MRS. M.—You know him.

ANTHONY—By heart, Mrs. Marshall.

MRS. M. [*aside*]—That is a little strong, since I have invented him.

ANTHONY—The prince is not worthy the interest you take in him.

MRS. M.—Really. And why?

ANTHONY—I do not know that I ought to tell you,—to give you such a blow.

MRS. M.—Speak.

ANTHONY—The prince loves another woman. [*Observes that Mrs. M. is unmoved.*] He has an intrigue,—the prince.

MRS. M. [*coldly*]—I hear you.

ANTHONY [*aside*]—She smiles. What do I say? one intrigue—two—three—with three skirt-dancers at once.

MRS. M. [*smiling*]—Bah! Continue.

ANTHONY [*aside*]—Always a smile. [*Aloud.*] He says he wishes to marry you,—it is false. He is married. [*Observes that she is still unmoved.*] He is married. His wife is in Rome.

MRS. M.—Really. Did he marry well?

ANTHONY [*aside*]—Ah! I am on the right road. [*Aloud, excitedly.*] The wretch—I say it deliberately—the wretch! He has presented himself to you as a man in a position to offer marriage, to present you with a fortune he has squandered in riotous living. He plays with the honor of women: he breaks hearts, desolates firesides—

MRS. M. [*shrieks with laughter*]—Ah! enough—enough! this poor prince. [*She falls into a chair helpless with laughter.*]

ANTHONY [*aside*]—Well, I'll give it up, and ask for my wages.

SARAH [*enters*]—Mrs. Marshall, I've just come from the dressmaker's.

MRS. M.—Well?

SARAH—Your dress wont be done until to-morrow.

MRS. M. [*gets up in great rage*]—To-morrow—to-morrow! Impossible! That miserable woman to—

ANTHONY [*jerks his sketch-book from his pocket*]—There! don't move, don't move!

MRS. M.—What—what is he doing?

ANTHONY—Your portrait. I've got it, don't move.

MRS. M. [*coming near*]—What, my portrait. [*Looks at the sketch.*] Why, it is Sarah.

ANTHONY—The idea!

SARAH—Let me see. [*Looks at it.*] Why, it's the cook.

ANTHONY—The idea!

MRS. M.—But, sir, who are you? What do you want?

ANTHONY—You shall know. Here is my card. [*Hands her one.*] I am not unknown.

MRS. M. [*reads*]—George Merritry. What is this?

SARAH [*aside, looking on*]—I wonder if he isn't a wine merchant?

ANTHONY—Merritry, painter of the "Salome with John the Baptist's head in a charger," exhibited last year.

MRS. M.—You are a painter?

ANTHONY—I hope so.

MRS. M.—Then what are you doing in this livery and in my house?

ANTHONY—I know not how you will pardon me. I needed a Judith to cut off the head of Holophernes, and I thought that you—

MRS. M.—Thanks, awfully.

ANTHONY—I saw you at the confectioner's, and the love of art drove me—I bought this livery to immortalize your face at the Academy.

MRS. M.—How, sir! were you going to put me on exhibition.

ANTHONY.—Give me this privilege. Think of my future.

MRS. M.—Very well, I consent. [*Aside.*] It looks like Sarah. [*Aloud.*] If Sarah will consent.

SARAH—Oh, yes, I will. [*Aside.*] It is the picture of the cook.

ANTHONY [*to Mrs. M.*]—You are an angel, and if I were to paint you I would put on the frame "Portrait of Mrs. M."

MRS. M.—Ah! [*Aside.*] He is foolish, not wicked.

ANTHONY [*bowing*]—It only remains for me to take leave.

MRS. M.—Pardon. Can you paint animals?

ANTHONY—I paint everything.

MRS. M.—I have a marmoset to which I am very much attached.

ANTHONY—Mrs. Marshall, I will immortalize it. [*Aside.*] At last I have an order. [*Aloud, bowing again.*] Ladies, adieu.

MRS. M. AND SARAH—Good-by!

CURTAIN.

The defendant was his own lawyer, and as the sequel proves he did not have a fool for a client. This sketch of the due processes of the law among the Cumberland Mountains is by M. Quad, and is republished from the *Detroit Tribune.*

TRIAL BY JUDGE.

In one of the valleys to the east of the main spur of the Cumberland, I stopped at a "huddle" of houses for the night. I was given a bed in a chamber with a window looking out onto the yard, and ten feet from the window stood a large apple tree. It being summer, the window-sash was raised.

It must have been about midnight when a sound at the window awoke me, and I got out of bed to see what was the matter. It did not take long to discover that some one was planning a surprise for me. A man had climbed the tree, and from a handy branch had thrust out a plank to reach the sill of the window. It was the end of the plank dropping on the sill which aroused me. I stood back a little to watch, and presently the fellow, whose color I could not determine, started to creep along the plank. I didn't know exactly what to do at first, but finally decided to give him a fall instead of a bullet. Waiting until he was midway between the window and the tree, I gave the end of the plank a shove and down he went, yelling in affright as he found himself going. He had scarcely struck the ground when some one seized him. The house was alarmed, everybody turned out, and when I got down the owner of the house was standing guard over the man and saying:

"Now, then, Jim Hivers, you'un has got yo'self into a powerful fuss! Yo'un has bin tryin' to git inter my cabin in the night time to rob the stranger, an' if you'un doan' dance high fur it I doan' want no mo' meat!"

"Wasn't a-tryin' to git in," sulkily replied Jim.

"Then what was yo'un doin?"

"Arter apples."

"Arter apples which haint as big as shucks at this time o' y'ar. Jim, yo' is bad—bad all the way up an' down. I've knowed it fur y'ars, and I've knowed that yo' would get cotched some day. The cotchin' has arrove."

"Cawn't prove it agin' me," calmly observed the prisoner.

"You'un just wait! I'm gwine to tie yo' up till daylight and then take yo' befo' Squar Taylor."

"Jess meant to look in the winder," explained Jim, who was evidently beginning to be alarmed.

"Oh, yes! We understand! Now, you'un come along to the smoke-house and doan' try any tricks on me!"

Next morning he was regularly arrested on a warrant charging him with intent to enter and rob. The examination took place in the school-house, and the justice conducted it without any lawyers to bother. When Jim was asked to plead, he replied:

"I jess didn't dun it, and I'll stick to my fat if yo' hang me!"

"Then I'll enter a plea of not guilty," said his honor, and he asked me take the stand. I testified as related above, but all was not smooth sailing. When I stated that I was aroused by a noise Jim put in:

"He'un doan' dun say what sort of a noise, Squar'. Thar's mo' than fifty kinds of noises, an' he'un's got to come right down fine!"

When I said that I looked out of the window and saw a man in the tree he interrupted with:

"Squar' Taylor, is you'un gwine to put that down agin' me? Thar's varus sorts o' men. How does he'un know it wasn't a nigger? Pin him right down, Squar'."

"Couldn't bin no nigger, nohow," said his honor. "Couldn't been nobody but yous, kase yous the one cotched."

When I testified to pushing the end of the plank off the sill Jim looked done up for a minute. Then a bright idea came and he exclaimed:

"Hold he'un down, Squar'. He says a plank! How long was that plank? What sort o' wood? Who did it belong to? Doan' give he'un no high ground over me kase he looks peart."

The owner of the house testified to having been disturbed by a strange noise, and he had just gone to the door when Jim fell from the tree.

"Shore it was me?" asked Jim.

"Of co'se."

"Doan' reckon it was anybody else?"

"Couldn't bin. Kase I grabbed it."

"Better be keerful! You's on oath! What did I say?"

"Said you'un was arter apples."

"Put that down plain, Squar'. Apples isn't as big as beans yit, and if I was arter apples it proves insanity. That's one fur me."

When he took the stand in his own defence he was asked:

"Prisoner, what is your name?"

"What yo' drivin' at, Squar' Taylor? Aint no use to menshun any names an' git up a great fuss in de papers. Jess go right along steady."

"Are you a resident of this village, county and State?"

"Jess h'ar him. Squar' Taylor, that haint no law. That's only foolin' around, jess like a man lookin' up a coon tree when the coon is somewhar' else."

"What is your occupation?" continued the Squire.

"Say, Squar'!" exclaimed Jim, as he arose and pounded on the desk, "this haint no case whar' somebody stole a hog. This is a case whar' a nigger climbed a tree to rob a white man in a house, an' it's got to go 'cordin to law or I'll draw right out!"

"Jim," replied the Justice, after some reflection, "you'un was up that tree."

"I dun deny it."

"You'un reckoned to git in that winder."

"What winder? Haint nobody swore on which side of the house that winder was."

"And you'un reckoned to rob the stranger."

"Hu! What's he'un got to be robbed of? Hain't nobody done swore he's got 'nuff to buy a coon's tail."

"And you'un was cotched."

"Can't agree with you, Squar'. If a feller stands still you can't cotch him. He's got to be on the run."

"You'un has been in jail fur stealin' tobacco."

"Hu! That's nuffin' to do with this case. Who knows how many times this stranger has been in jail? Put him right up and ax him the queshun, Squar'."

The Justice scratched his head, sharpened his goose-quill pen, looked from me to Jim and back in a doubtful way, and finally said:

"Jim Hivers, I'm goin' to let you'un go free."

"Of co'se."

"But be powerful keerful how yous go blowin' yous horn around in future."

"I hain't gwine to blow."

When court was dismissed his honor came over to me and said:

"It's too bad to let he'un go, but I didn't want to upsot you'un."

"How do you mean?"

"Why, he'un was bound to ask if you'un had ever been in jail for a crime."

"Well."

"I thought from your looks that you'un certainly had, and perhaps in a stronger place, and I wasn't goin' to let he'un git the crow on you!"

It is believed by a good many people that the aristocracy of matter is breaking down—that inanimate matter has in fact its own life, although the degree of the sentiency has not yet been determined. In this light the following story, which was written a good many years ago, is recalled as a timely illustration. The author is Lucretia P. Hale, and it is republished, by permission, from the *Atlantic Monthly*.

THE QUEEN OF THE RED CHESSMEN.

THE box of chessmen had been left open all night. That was a great oversight! For everybody knows that the contending chessmen are but too eager to fight their battles over again by midnight, if a chance is only allowed them.

It was at the Willows,—so called, not because the house is surrounded by willows, but because a little clump of them hangs over the pond close by. It is a pretty place, with its broad lawn in front of the doorway, its winding avenue hidden from the road by high trees. It is a quiet place, too; the sun rests gently on the green lawn, and the drooping leaves of the willows hang heavily over the water.

No one would imagine what violent contests were going on under the still roof, this very night. It was the night of the first of May. The moon came silently out from the shadows; the trees were scarcely stirring. The box of chessmen had been left on the balcony steps by the drawing-room window, and the window, too, that warm night, had been left open. So, one by one, all the chessmen came out to fight over again their evening's battles.

It was a famously carved set of chessmen. The bishops wore their mitres, the knights pranced on spirited steeds, the castles rested on the backs of elephants,—even the pawns mimicked the private soldiers of an army. The skilful carver had given to each piece, and each pawn, too, a certain individuality. That night

there had been a close contest. Two well-matched players had guided the game, and it had ended with leaving a deep irritation on the conquered side.

It was Isabella, the Queen of the Red Chessmen, who had been obliged to yield. She was young and proud, and it was she, indeed, who held the rule; for her father, the old Red King, had grown too imbecile to direct affairs; he merely bore the name of sovereignty. And Isabella was loved by knights, pawns, and all; the bishops were willing to die in her cause, the castles would have crumbled to earth for her. Opposed to her, stood the detested White Queen. All the Whites, of course, were despised by her; but the haughty, self-sufficient queen angered her most.

The White Queen was reigning during the minority of her only son. The White Prince had reached the age of nineteen, but the strong mind of his mother had kept him always under restraint. A simple youth, he had always yielded to her control. He was pure-hearted and gentle, but never ventured to make a move of his own. He sought shelter under cover of his castles, while his more energetic mother went forth at the head of his army. She was dreaded by her subjects,—never loved by them. Her own pawn, it is true, had ventured much for her sake, had often with his own life redeemed her from captivity; but it was loyalty that bound even him,—no warmer feeling of devotion or love.

The Queen Isabella was the first to come out from her prison.

"I will stay here no longer," she cried; "the blood of the Reds grows pale in this inactivity."

She stood upon the marble steps; the May moon shone down upon her. She listened a moment to a slight murmuring within the drawing-room window. The Spanish lady, the Murillo-painted Spanish lady, had come down from her frame that bound her against the wall. Just for this one night in the year, she stepped out from the canvas to walk up and down the rooms majestically. She would not exchange a word

with anybody; nobody understood her language. She could remember when Murillo looked at her, watched over her, created her with his pencil. She could have nothing to say to little paltry shepherdesses, and other articles of *virtu*, that came into grace and motion just at this moment.

The Queen of the Red Chessmen turned away, down into the avenue. The May moon shone upon her. Her feet trod upon unaccustomed ground; no black or white square hemmed her in; she felt a new liberty.

"My poor old father!" she exclaimed, "I will leave him behind; better let him slumber in an ignoble repose than wander over the board, a laughing-stock for his enemies. We have been conquered,—the foolish White Prince rules!"

A strange inspiration stole upon her; the breath of the May night hovered over her; the May moon shone upon her. She could move without waiting for the will of another; she was free. She passed down the avenue; she had left her old prison behind.

Early in the morning,—it was just after sunrise,—the kind Doctor Lester was driving home, after watching half the night out with a patient. He passed the avenue to the Willows, but drew up his horse just as he was leaving the entrance. He saw a young girl sitting under the hedge. She was without any bonnet, in a red dress, fitting closely and hanging heavily about her. She was so very beautiful, she looked so strangely lost and out of place here at this early hour, that the Doctor could not resist speaking to her.

"My child, how came you here?"

The young girl rose up, and looked round with uncertainty.

"Where am I?" she asked.

She was very tall and graceful, with an air of command, but with a strange, wild look in her eyes.

"The young woman must be slightly insane," thought the Doctor; "but she cannot have wandered far."

"Let me take you home," he said aloud. "Perhaps you come from the Willows?"

"Oh, don't take me back there!" cried Isabella, "they will imprison me again! I had rather be a slave than a conquered queen!"

"Decidedly insane!" thought the Doctor. "I must take her back to the Willows."

He persuaded the young girl to let him lift her into his chaise. She did not resist him; but when he turned up the avenue, she leaned back in despair. He was fortunate enough to find one of the servants up at the house, just sweeping the steps of the hall door. Getting out of his chaise, he said confidentially to the servant,—

"I have brought back your young lady."

"Our young lady!" exclaimed the man, as the Doctor pointed out Isabella.

"Yes; she is a little insane, is she not?"

"She is not our young lady," answered the servant; "we have nobody in the house just now but Mr. and Mrs. Fogerty, and Mrs. Fogerty's brother, the old geologist."

"Where did she come from?" inquired the Doctor.

"I never saw her before," said the servant, "and I certainly should remember. There's some foreign folks live down in the cottage, by the railroad; but they are not the like of her!"

The Doctor got into his chaise again, bewildered.

"My child," he said, "you must tell me where you came from."

"Oh, don't let me go back aagin!" said Isabella, clasping her hands imploringly. "Think how hard it must be never to take a move of one's own! to know how the game might be won, then see it lost through folly! Oh, that last game, lost through utter weakness! There was that one move! Why did he not push me down to the king's row? I might have checkmated the White Prince, shut in by his own castles and pawns,—it would have been a direct checkmate! Think of his folly! he stopped to take the queen's pawn with his bishop, and within one move of a checkmate!"

"Quite insane!" repeated the Doctor. "But I must

have my breakfast. She seems quiet; I think I can keep her till after breakfast, and then I must try and find where the poor child's friends live. I don't know what Mrs. Lester will think of her."

They rode on. Isabella looked timidly round.

"You don't quite believe me," she said, at last. "It seems strange to you."

"It does," answered the Doctor, "seem very strange."

"Not stranger than to me," said Isabella,—"it is so very grand to me! All this motion! Look down at that great field there, not cut up into squares! If I only had my knights and squires there! I would be willing to give *her* as good a field, too; but I would show her where the true bravery lies. What a place for the castles, just to defend that pass!"

The Doctor whipped up his horse.

Mrs. Lester was a little surprised at the companion her husband had brought home to breakfast with him.

"Who is it?" she whispered.

"That I don't know,—I shall have to find out," he answered, a little nervously.

"Where is her bonnet?" asked Mrs. Lester; this was the first absence of conventionality she had noticed.

"You had better ask her," answered the Doctor.

But Mrs. Lester preferred leaving her guest in the parlor while she questioned her husband. She was somewhat disturbed when she found he had nothing more satisfactory to tell her.

"An insane girl! and what shall we do with her?" she asked.

"After breakfast I will make some inquiries about her," answered the Doctor.

"And leave her alone with us? that will never do! You must take her away directly,—at least to the Insane Asylum,—somewhere! What if she should grow wild while you were gone? She might kill us all! I will go in and tell her that she cannot stay here."

On returning to the parlor, she found Isabella looking dreamily out of the window. As Mrs. Lester approached, she turned.

"You will let me stay with you a little while, will you not?"

She spoke in a quiet tone, with an air somewhat commanding. It imposed upon nervous little Mrs. Lester. But she made a faint struggle.

"Perhaps you would rather go home," she said.

"I have no home now," said Isabella; "some time I may recover it; but my throne has been usurped."

Mrs. Lester looked round in alarm, to see if the Doctor were near.

"Perhaps you had better come in to breakfast," she suggested.

She was glad to place the Doctor between herself and their new guest.

Celia Lester, the only daughter, came downstairs. She had heard that her father had picked up a lost girl in the road. As she came down in her clean morning dress, she expected to have to hold her skirts away from some little squalid object of charity. She started when she saw the elegant-looking young girl who sat at the table. There was something in her air and manner that seemed to make the breakfast equipage, and the furniture of the room about her, look a little mean and poor. Yet the Doctor was very well off, and Mrs. Lester fancied she had everything quite in style. Celia stole into her place, feeling small in the presence of the stranger.

After breakfast, when the Doctor had somewhat refreshed himself by its good cheer from his last night's fatigue, Isabella requested to speak with him.

"Let me stay with you a little while," she asked, beseechingly; "I will do everything for you that you desire. You shall teach me anything;—I know I can learn all that you will show me, all that Mrs. Lester will tell me."

"Perhaps so,—perhaps that will be best," answered the Doctor, "until your friends inquire for you; then I must send you back to them."

"Very well, very well," said Isabella, relieved. "But I must tell you they will not inquire for me. I

see you will not believe my story. If you only would listen to me, I could tell it all to you."

"That is the only condition I can make with you," answered the Doctor, "that you will not tell your story,—that you will never even think of it yourself. I am a physician. I know that it is not good for you to dwell upon such things. Do not talk of them to me, nor to my wife or daughter. Never speak of your story to any one who comes here. It will be better for you."

"Better for me," said Isabella, dreamily, "that no one should know! Perhaps so. I am, in truth, captive to the White Prince; and if he should come and demand me,—I should be half afraid to try the risks of another game."

"Stop, stop!" exclaimed the Doctor, "you are already forgetting the condition. I shall be obliged to take you away to some retreat, unless you promise me——"

"Oh, I will promise you anything," interrupted Isabella; "and you will see that I can keep my promise."

Meanwhile Mrs. Lester and Celia had been holding a consultation.

"I think she must be some one in disguise," suggested Celia.

Celia was one of the most unromantic of persons. Both she and her mother had passed their lives in an unvarying routine of duties. Neither of them had ever found time from their sewing even to read. Celia had her books of history laid out, that she meant to take up when she should get through her work; but it seemed hopeless that this time would ever come. It had never come to Mrs. Lester, and she was now fifty years old. Celia had never read any novels. She had tried to read them, but never was interested in them. So she had a vague idea of what romance was, conceiving of it only as something quite different from her every-day life. For this reason the unnatural event that was taking place this very day was gradually appearing to her something possible and natural. Because she knew there was such a thing as romance, and that it was

something quite beyond her comprehension, she was the more willing to receive this event quietly from finding it incomprehensible.

"We can let her stay here to-day, at least," said Mrs. Lester. "We will keep John at work in the front door-yard, in case we should want him. And I will set Mrs. Anderson's boy to weeding in the border; we can call him, if we should want to send for help."

She was quite ashamed of herself, when she had uttered these words, and Isabella walked into the room, so composed, so refined, in her manners.

"The Doctor says I may stay here a little while, if you will let me," said Isabella, as she took Mrs. Lester's hands.

"We will try to make you comfortable," replied Mrs. Lester.

"He says you will teach me many things,—I think he said, how to sew."

"How to sew! Was it possible she did not know how to sew?" Celia thought to herself, "How many servants she must have had, never to have learned how to sew, herself!"

And this occupation was directly provided, while the Doctor set forth on his day's duties, and at the same time to inquire about the strange apparition of the young girl. He was so convinced that there was a vein of insanity about her, that he was very sure that questioning her only excited her the more. Just as he had parted from her, some compunction seized her, and she followed him to the door.

"There is my father," said she.

"Your father! where shall I find him?" asked the Doctor.

"Oh, he could not help me," she replied; "it is a long time since he has been able to direct affairs. He has scarcely been conscious of my presence, and will hardly feel my absence, his mind is so weak."

"But where can I find him?" persisted the Doctor.

"He did not come out," said Isabella; "the White Queen would not allow it, indeed."

"Stop, stop!" exclaimed the Doctor, "we are on forbidden ground."

He drove away.

"So there is insanity in the family," he thought to himself. "I am quite interested in this case. A new form of monomania! I should be quite sorry to lose sight of it. I shall be loath to give her up to her friends."

But he was not yet put to that test. No one could give him any light with regard to the strange girl. He went first to the Willows, and found there so much confusion that he could hardly persuade any one to listen to his questions. Mrs. Fogerty's brother, the geologist, had been riding that morning, and had fallen from his horse and broken his leg. The Doctor arrived just in time to be of service in setting it. Then he must linger some time to see that the old gentleman was comfortable, so that he was obliged to stay nearly the whole morning. He was much amused at the state of disturbance in which he left the family. The whole house was in confusion, looking after some lost chessmen.

"There was nothing," said Mrs. Fogerty, apologetically, "that would soothe her brother so much as a game of chess. That, perhaps, might keep him quiet. He would be willing to play chess with Mr. Fogerty by the day together. It was so strange! they had a game the night before, and now some of the pieces could not be found. Her brother had lost the game, and to-day he was so eager to take his revenge!"

"How absurd!" thought the Doctor; "what trifling things people interest themselves in! Here is this old man more disturbed at losing his game of chess than he is at breaking his leg! It is different in my profession, where one deals with life and death. Here is this young girl's fate in my hands, and they talk to me of the loss of a few paltry chessmen!"

The "foreign people" at the cottage knew nothing of Isabella. No one had seen her the night before, or at any time. Dr. Lester even drove ten miles to Dr.

Giles's Retreat for the Insane, to see if it were possible that a patient could have wandered away from there. Dr. Giles was deeply interested in the account Dr. Lester gave. He would very gladly take such a person under his care.

"No," said Dr. Lester, "I will wait a while. I am interested in the young girl. It is not possible but that I shall in time find out from her, by chance, perhaps, who her friends are, and where she came from. She must have wandered away in some delirium of fever,—but it is very strange, for she appears perfectly calm now. Yet I hardly know in what state I shall find her."

He returned to find her very quiet and calm, learning from his wife and daughter how to sew. She seemed deeply interested in this new occupation, and had given all her time and thought to it. Celia and her mother privately confided to the Doctor their admiration of their strange guest. Her ways were so graceful and beautiful! all that she said seemed so new and singular! The Doctor, before he went away, had exhorted Mrs. Lester and Celia to ask her no questions about her former life, and everything had gone on very smoothly. And everything went on as smoothly for some weeks. Isabella seemed willing to be as silent as the Doctor upon all exciting subjects. She appeared to be quite taken up with her sewing, much to Mrs. Lester's delight.

"She will turn out quite as good a seamstress as Celia," said she to the Doctor. "She sews steadily all the time, and nothing seems to please her so much as to finish a piece of work. She will be able to do much more than her own sewing, and may prove quite a help to us."

"I shall be very glad," said the Doctor, "if anything can be a help, to prevent you and Celia from working yourselves to death. I shall be glad if you can ever have done with that eternal sewing. It is time that Celia should do something about cultivating her mind."

"Celia's mind is so well regulated," interrupted Mrs. Lester.

"We wont discuss that," continued the Doctor,—"we

never come to an agreement there. I was going on to say that I am becoming so interested in Isabella that I feel towards her as if she were my own. If she is of help to the family, that is very well,—it is the best thing for her to be able to make herself of use. But I don't care to make any profit to ourselves out of her help. Somehow I begin to think of her as belonging to us. Certainly she belongs to nobody else. Let us treat her as our own child. We have but one, yet God has given us means enough to care for many more. I confess I should find it hard to give Isabella up to any one else. I like to find her when I come home,—it is pleasant to look at her."

"And I, too, love her," said Mrs. Lester. "I like to see her as she sits quietly at her work."

So Isabella went on learning what it was to be one of the family, and becoming, as Mrs. Lester remarked, a very experienced seamstress. She seldom said anything as she sat at her work, but seemed quite occupied with her sewing; while Mrs. Lester and Celia kept up a stream of conversation, seldom addressing Isabella, as, indeed, they had few topics in common.

One day Celia and Isabella were sitting together.

"Have you always sewed?" asked Isabella.

"Oh, yes," answered Celia,—"since I was quite a child."

"And do you remember when you were a child?" asked Isabella, laying down her work.

"Oh, yes, indeed," said Celia; "I used to make all my doll's dresses myself."

"Your doll's dresses!" repeated Isabella.

"Oh, yes," replied Celia,—"I was not ashamed to play with dolls in that way."

"I should like to see some dolls," said Isabella.

"I will show you my large doll," said Celia; "I have always kept it, because I fitted it out with such a nice set of clothes. And I keep it for children to play with."

She brought her doll, and Isabella handled it and looked at it with curiosity.

"So you dressed this, and played with it," said Isa-

bella inquiringly, "and moved it about as one would move a piece at chess?"

Celia started at this word "chess." It was one of the forbidden words. But Isabella went on:—

"Suppose this doll should suddenly have begun to speak, to move, and walk round, would not you have liked it?"

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Celia. "What! a wooden thing speak and move! It would have frightened me very much."

"Why should it not speak, if it has a mouth, and walk, if it has feet?" asked Isabella.

"What foolish questions you ask!" exclaimed Celia; "of course it has not life."

"Oh, life,—that is it!" said Isabella. "Well, what is life?"

"Life! why it is what makes us live," answered Celia. "Of course you know what life is."

"No, I don't know," said Isabella, "but I have been thinking about it lately, while I have been sewing,—what it is."

"But you should not think, you should talk more, Isabella," said Celia. "Mamma and I talk while we are at work, but you are always very silent."

"But you think sometimes?" asked Isabella.

"Not about such things," replied Celia. "I have to think about my work."

"But your father thinks, I suppose, when he comes home and sits in his study alone?"

"Oh, he reads when he goes into his study,—he reads books and studies them," said Celia.

"Do you know how to read?" asked Isabella.

"Do I know how to read!" cried Celia, angrily.

"Forgive me," said Isabella quickly, "but I never saw you reading. I thought perhaps—women are so different here!"

She did not finish her sentence, for she saw Celia was really angry. Yet she had no idea of hurting her feelings. She had tried to accommodate herself to her new circumstances. She had observed a great deal, and

had never been in the habit of asking questions. Celia was disturbed at having it supposed that she did not know how to read; therefore it must be a very important thing to know how to read, and she determined she must learn. She applied to the Doctor. He was astonished at her entire ignorance, but he was very glad to help her. Isabella gave herself up to her reading, as she had done before to her sewing. The Doctor was now the gainer. All the time he was away, Isabella sat in his study, poring over her books; when he returned, she had a famous lesson to recite to him. Then he began to tell her of books that he was interested in. He made Celia come in for a history class. It was such a pleasure to him to find Isabella interested in what he could tell her of history!

"All this really happened," said Isabella to Celia once,—"these people really lived!"

"Yes, but they died," responded Celia, in an indifferent tone,—"and ever so long ago, too!"

"But did they die," asked Isabella, "if we can talk about them, and imagine how they looked? They live for us as much as they did then."

"That I can't understand," said Celia. "My uncle saw Napoleon when he was in Europe, long ago. But I never saw Napoleon. He is dead and gone to me, just as much as Alexander the Great."

"Well, who does live, if Alexander the Great, if Napoleon, and Columbus do not live?" asked Isabella impatiently.

"Why, papa and mamma live," answered Celia, "and you——"

"And the butcher," interrupted Isabella, "because he brings you meat to eat; and Mr. Spool, because he keeps the thread store. Thank you for putting me in, too! Once——"

"Once!" answered Celia, in a dignified tone; "I suppose once you lived in a grander circle, and it appears to you we have nobody better than Mr. Spool and the butcher."

Isabella was silent, and thought of her "circle," her

former circle. The circle here was large enough, the circumference not very great, but there were as many points in it as in a larger one. There were pleasant, motherly Mrs. Gibbs, and her agreeable daughters,—the Gresham boys, just in college,—the Misses Tarletan, fresh from a New York boarding-school,—Mr. Lovell, the young minister,—and the old Misses Pendleton, that made raspberry-jam ,—together with Celia's particular friends, Anna and Selina Mountfort, who had a great deal of talking with Celia in private, but not a word to say to anybody in the parlor. All these, with many others in the background, had been speculating upon the riddle that Isabella presented,—"Who was she? and where did she come from?"

Nobody found any satisfactory answer. Neither Celia nor her mother would disclose anything. It is a great convenience, in keeping a secret, not to know what it is. One can't easily tell what one does not know.

"The Doctor really has a treasure in his wife and daughter," said Mrs. Gibbs, "they keep his secrets so well! Neither of them will lisp a word about this handsome Isabella."

"I have no doubt she is the daughter of an Italian refugee," said one of the Misses Tarletan. "We saw a number of Italian refugees in New York."

This opinion became prevalent in the neighborhood. That Doctor Lester should be willing to take charge of an unknown girl did not astonish those who knew of his many charitable deeds. It was not more than he had done for his cousin's child, who had no especial claim upon him. He had adopted Lawrence Egerton, educated him, sent him to college, and was giving him every advantage in his study of the law. In the end Lawrence would probably marry Celia and the pretty property that the Doctor would leave behind for his daughter.

"She is one of my patients," the Doctor would say, to any one who asked him about her.

The tale that she was the daughter of an Italian

refugee became more rife after Isabella had begun to study Italian. She liked to have the musical Italian words linger on her tongue. She quoted Italian poetry, read Italian history. In conversation she generally talked of the present, rarely of the past or of the future. She listened with wonder to those who had a talent for reminiscence. How rich their past must be, that they should be willing to dwell in it! Her own she thought very meagre. If she wanted to live in the past, it must be in the past of great men, not in that of her own little self. So she read of great painters and great artists, and because she read of them she talked of them. Other people, in referring to bygone events, would say, "When I was in Trenton last summer,"—"In Cuba, the spring that we were there"; but Isabella would say, "When Raphael died, or when Dante lived." Everybody liked to talk with her,—laughed with her at her enthusiasm. There was something inspiring, too, in this enthusiasm; it compelled attention, as her air and manner always attracted notice. By her side, the style and elegance of the Misses Tarletan faded out; here was a moon that quite extinguished the light of their little tapers. She became the centre of admiration; the young girls admired her, as they are prone to admire some one particular star. She never courted attention, but it was always given.

"Isabella attracts everybody," said Celia to her mother. "Even the old Mr. Spencers, who have never been touched by woman before, follow her, and act just as she wills."

Little Celia, who had been quite a belle hitherto, sunk into the shade by the side of the brilliant Isabella. Yet she followed willingly in the sunny wake that Isabella left behind. She expanded somewhat, herself, for she was quite ashamed to know nothing of all that Isabella talked about so earnestly. The sewing gave place to a little reading, to Mrs. Lester's horror. The Mountforts and the Gibbses met with Isabella and Celia to read and study, and went into town with them to lectures and to concerts.

A winter passed away and another summer came. Still Isabella was at Dr. Lester's; and with the lapse of time the harder did it become for the Doctor to question her of her past history,—the more, too, was she herself weaned from it.

The young people had been walking in the garden one evening.

"Let me sit by you here in the porch," said Lawrence Egerton to Celia,—"I want rest, for body and spirit. I am always in a battle-field when I am talking with Isabella. I must either fight with her or against her. She insists on my fighting all the time. I have to keep my weapons bright, ready for use, every moment. She will lead me, too, in conversation, sends me here, orders me there. I feel like a poor knight in chess, under the sway of a queen——"

"I don't know anything about chess," said Celia curtly.

"It is a comfort to have you a little ignorant," said Lawrence. "Please stay in bliss a while. It is repose, it is refreshment. Isabella drags one into the company of her heroes, and then one feels completely ashamed not to be on more familiar terms with them all. Her Mazzinis, her Tancreds, heroes false and true,—it makes no difference to her,—put one into a whirl between history and story. What a row she would make in Italy, if she went back there!"

"What could we do without her?" said Celia; "it was so quiet and commonplace before she came!"

"That is the trouble," replied Lawrence, "Isabella wont let anything remain commonplace. She pulls everything out of its place,—makes a hero or heroine out of a piece of clay. I don't want to be in heroics all the time. Even Homer's heroes ate their suppers comfortably. I think it was a mistake in your father, bringing her here. Let her stay in her sphere queening it, and leave us poor mortals to our bread and butter."

"You know you don't think so," expostulated Celia; "you worship her shoe-tie, the hem of her garment."

"But I don't want to," said Lawrence,—"it is a compulsory worship. I had rather be quiet."

"Lazy Lawrence!" cried Celia, "it is better for you. You would be the first to miss Isabella. You would find us quite flat without her brilliancy, and would be hunting after some other excitement."

"Perhaps so," said Lawrence. "But here she comes to goad us on again. Queen Isabella, when do the bull-fights begin?"

"I wish I were Queen Isabella!" she exclaimed. "Have you read the last accounts from Spain? I was reading them to the Doctor to-day. Nobody knows what to do there. Only think what an opportunity for the Queen to show herself a queen! Why will not she make of herself such a queen as the great Isabella of Castile was?"

"I can't say," answered Lawrence.

"Queens rule in chess," said Horace Gresham. "I always wondered that the king was made such a poor character there. He is not only ruled by his cabinet, bishops, and knights, but his queen is by far the more warlike character."

"Whoever plays the game rules,—you or Mr. Egerton," said Isabella bitterly; "it is not the poor queen. She must yield to the power of the moving hand. I suppose it is so with us women. We see a great aim before us, but have not the power."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Lawrence, "it is just the reverse. With some women,—for I wont be personal,—the aim, as you call it, is very small,—a poor amusement, another dress, a larger house——"

"You may stop," interrupted Isabella, "for you don't believe this. At least, keep some of your flings for the women that deserve them; Celia and I don't accept them."

"Then we'll talk of the last aim we were discussing,—the ride to-morrow."

The next winter was passed by Mrs. Lester, her daughter, and Isabella in Cuba. Lawrence Egerton accompanied them thither, and the Doctor hoped to go

for them in the spring. They went on Mrs. Lester's account. She had worn herself out with her household labors,—very uselessly, the Doctor thought,—so he determined to send her away from them. Isabella and Celia were very happy all this winter and spring. With Isabella, Spanish took the place of Italian studies. She liked talking in Spanish. They made some friends among the residents, as well as among the strangers, particularly the Americans. Of these last, they enjoyed most the society of Mrs. Blanchard and her son, Otho, who were at the same hotel with them.

The opera, too, was a new delight to Isabella, and even Celia was excited by it.

"It is a little too absurd, to see the dying scene of Romeo and Juliet sung out in an opera!" remarked Lawrence Egerton, one morning; "all the music of the spheres could not have made that scene, last night, otherwise than supremely ridiculous."

"I am glad you did not sit by us, then," replied Celia; "Isabella and I were crying."

"I dare say," said Lawrence. "I should be afraid to take you to see a tragedy well acted. You would both be in hysterics before the killing was over."

"I should be really afraid," said Celia, "to see Romeo and Juliet finely performed. It would be too sad."

"It would be much better to end it up comfortably," said Lawrence. "Why should not Juliet marry her Romeo in peace?"

"It would be impossible!" exclaimed Isabella,—"impossible to bring together two such hostile families! Of course the result must be a tragedy."

"In romances," answered Lawrence, "that may be necessary; but not in real life."

"Why not in real life?" asked Isabella. "When two thunder-clouds meet, there must be an explosion."

"But we don't have such hostile families arrayed against each other nowadays," said Lawrence. "The Bianchi and the Neri have died out; unless the feud lives between the whites and the blacks of the present day."

"Are you sure that it has died out everywhere?" asked Isabella.

"Certainly not," said Otho Blanchard; "my mother, Bianca Bianco, inherits her name from a long line of ancestry, and with it come its hatreds as well as its loves."

"You speak like an Italian or a Spaniard," said Lawrence. "We are cold-blooded Yankees, and in our slow veins such passions do die out. I should have taken you for an American from your name."

"It is our name Americanized; we have made Americans of ourselves, and the Bianchi have become the Blanchards."

"The romance of the family, then," persisted Lawrence, "must needs become Americanized too. If you were to meet with a lovely young lady of the enemy's race, I think you would be willing to bury your sword in the sheath for her sake."

"I hope I should not forget the honor of my family," said Otho. "I certainly never could, as long as my mother lives; her feelings on the subject are stronger even than mine."

"I cannot imagine the possibility of such feelings dying out," said Isabella. "I cannot imagine such different elements amalgamating. It would be like fire and water uniting. Then there would be no longer any contest; the game of life would be over."

"Why will you make out life to be a battle always?" exclaimed Lawrence; "wont you allow us any peace? I do not find such contests all the time,—never, except when I am fighting with you."

"I had rather fight with you than against you," said Isabella, laughing. "But when one is not striving, one is sleeping."

"That reminds me that it is time for our siesta," said Lawrence; "so we need not fight any longer."

Afterwards Isabella and Celia were talking of their new friend Otho.

"He does not seem to me like a Spaniard," said Celia, "his complexion is so light; then, too, his name sounds German."

"But his passions are quick," replied Isabella. "How he colored up when he spoke of the honor of his family!"

"I wonder that you like him," said Celia; "when he is with his mother, he hardly ventures to say his soul is his own."

"I don't like his mother," said Isabella; "her manner is too imperious and unrefined, it appears to me. No wonder that Otho is ill at ease in her presence. It is evident that her way of talking is not agreeable to him. He is afraid that she will commit herself in some way."

"But he never stands up for himself," answered Celia; "he always yields to her. Now I should not think you would like that."

"He yields because she is his mother," said Isabella; "and it would not be becoming to contradict her."

"He yields to you too," said Celia; "how happens that?"

"I hope he does not yield to me more than is becoming," answered Isabella, laughing; "perhaps that is why I like him. After all, I don't care to be always sparring, as I am with Lawrence Egerton. With Otho I find that I agree wonderfully in many things. Neither of us yields to the other, neither of us is obliged to convince the other."

"Now I should think you would find that stupid," said Celia. "What becomes of this desire of yours never to rest, always to be struggling after something?"

"We might strive together, we might struggle together," responded Isabella.

She said this musingly, not in answer to Celia, but to her own thoughts,—as she looked away, out from everything that surrounded her. The passion for ruling had always been uppermost in her mind; suddenly there dawned upon her the pleasure of being ruled. She became conscious of the pleasure of conquering all things for the sake of giving all to another. A new sense of peace stole upon her mind. Before, she had felt herself alone, even in the midst of the kindness of the home that had been given her. She had never dared to think or to speak of the past, and as little of

the future. She had gladly flung herself into the details of ever-day life. She had given her mind to the study of all that it required. She loved the Doctor, because he was always leading her on to fresh fields, always exciting her to a new knowledge. She loved him, too, for himself, for his tenderness and kindness to her. With Mrs. Lester and Celia she felt herself on a different footing. They admired her, but they never came near her. She led them, and they were always behind her.

With Otho she experienced a new feeling. He seemed, very much as she did herself, out of place in the world just around him. He was a foreigner,—was not yet acclimated to the society about him. He was willing to talk of other things than every-day events. He did not talk of "things," indeed, but he speculated, as though he lived a separate life from that of mere eating and drinking. He was not content with what seemed to every-day people possible, but was willing to believe that there were things not dreamed of in their philosophy.

"It is a satisfaction," said Lawrence once to Celia, "that Isabella has found somebody who will go high enough into the clouds to suit her. Besides, it gives me a little repose."

"And a secret jealousy at the same time; is it not so?" asked Celia. "He takes up too much of Isabella's time to please you."

"The reason he pleases her," said Lawrence, "is because he is more womanly than manly, and she thinks women ought to rule the world. Now if the world were made up of such as he, it would be very easily ruled. Isabella loves power too well to like to see it in others. Look at her when she is with Mrs. Blanchard! It is a splendid sight to see them together!"

"How can you say so? I am always afraid of some outbreak." These families were, however, so much drawn together, that, when the Doctor came to summon his wife and daughter and Isabella home, Mrs. Blanchard was anxious to accompany them to New England. She

wondered if it were not possible to find a country-seat somewhere near the Lesters, that she could occupy for a time. The Doctor knew that the Willows was to be vacant this spring. The Fogertys were all going to Europe, and would be very willing to let their place.

So it was arranged after their return. The Fogertys left for Europe, and Mrs. Blanchard took possession of the Willows. It was a pleasant walking distance from the Lesters, but it was several weeks before Isabella made her first visit there. She was averse to going into the house, but, in company with Celia, Lawrence, and Otho, walked about the grounds. Presently they stopped near a pretty fountain that was playing in the midst of the garden.

"That is a pretty place for an Undine," said Otho.

"The idea of an Undine makes me shiver," said Lawrence. "Think what a cold-blooded, unearthly being she would be!"

"Not after she had a soul!" exclaimed Isabella.

"An Undine with a soul!" cried Lawrence. "I conceive of them as malicious spirits, who live and die as the bubbles of water rise and fall."

"You talk as if there were such things as Undines," said Celia. "I remember once trying to read the story of Undine, but I never could finish it."

"It ends tragically," remarked Otho.

"Of course all such stories must," responded Lawrence; "of course it is impossible to bring the natural and the unnatural together."

"That depends upon what you call the natural," said Otho.

"We should differ, I suppose," said Lawrence, "if we tried to explain what we each call the natural. I fancy your 'real life' is different from mine."

"Pictures of real life," said Isabella, "are sometimes pictures of horses and dogs, sometimes of children playing, sometimes of fruits of different seasons heaped upon one dish, sometimes of watermelons cut open."

"That is hardly your picture of real life," said Lawrence, laughing,—"a watermelon cut open! I think

you would rather choose the picture of the Water Fairies from the Düsseldorf Gallery."

"Why not?" said Isabella. "The life we see must be very far from being the only life that is."

"That is very true," answered Lawrence; "but let the fairies live their life by themselves, while we live our life in our own way. Why should they come to disturb our peace, since we cannot comprehend them, and they certainly cannot comprehend us?"

"You do not think it well, then," said Isabella, stopping in their walk, and looking down,—"you do not think it well that beings of different natures should mingle?"

"I do not see how they can," replied Lawrence. "I am limited by my senses; I can perceive only what they show me. Even my imagination can picture to me only what my senses can paint."

"Your senses!" cried Otho, contemptuously,—"it is very true, as you confess, you are limited by your senses. Is all this beauty around you created merely for you—and the other insects about us? I have no doubt it is filled with invisible life."

"Do let us go in!" said Celia. "This talk, just at twilight, under the shade of this shrubbery, makes me shudder. I am not afraid of the fairies. I never could read fairy stories when I was a child; they were tiresome to me. But talking in this way makes one timid. There might be strollers or thieves under all these hedges."

They went into the house, through the hall, and different apartments, till they reached the drawing-room. Isabella stood transfixed upon the threshold. It was all so familiar to her!—everything as she had known it before! Over the mantel-piece hung the picture of the scornful Spanish lady; a heavy bookcase stood in one corner; comfortable chairs and couches were scattered round the room; beautiful landscapes against the wall seemed like windows cut into foreign scenery. There was an air of ease in the room, an old-fashioned sort of ease, such as the Fogertys must have loved.

"It is a pretty room, is it not?" said Lawrence. "You look at it as if it pleased you. How much more comfort there is about it than in the fashionable parlors of the day! It is solid, substantial comfort."

"You look at it as if you had seen it before," said Otho to Isabella. "Do you know, the room impressed me in that way, too?"

"It is singular," said Lawrence, "the feeling, that 'all this has been before,' that comes over one at times. I have heard it expressed by a great many people."

"Have you, indeed, ever had this feeling?" asked Isabella.

"Certainly," replied Lawrence; "I say to myself sometimes, 'I have been through this before!' and I can almost go on to tell what is to come next—it seems so much a part of my past experience."

"It is strange it should be so with you—and with you too," she said, turning to Otho.

"Perhaps we are all more alike than we have thought," said Otho.

Otho's mother appeared, and the conversation took another turn.

Isabella did not go to the Willows again until all the Lester family were summoned there to a large party that Mrs. Blanchard gave. She called it a house-warming, although she had been in the house some time. It was a beautiful evening. A clear moonlight made it as brilliant outside on the lawn as the lights made the house within. There was a band of music stationed under the shrubbery, and those who chose could dance. Those who were more romantic wandered away down the shaded walks, and listened to the dripping of the fountain.

Lawrence and Isabella returned from a walk through the grounds, and stopped a moment on the terrace in front of the house. Just then a dark cloud appeared in the sky, threatening the moon. The wind, too, was rising, and made a motion among the leaves of the trees.

"Do you remember," asked Lawrence, "that child's

story of the Fisherman and his Wife? how the fisherman went down to the sea-shore, and cried out,—

'O man of the sea,
Come listen to me!
For Alice, my wife,
The plague of my life,
Has sent me to beg a boon of thee!'

The sea muttered and roared;—do you remember? There was always something impressive to me in the descriptions, in the old story, of the changes in the sea, and of the tempest that rose up, more and more fearful, as the fisherman's wife grew more ambitious and more and more grasping in her desires, each time that the fisherman went down to the sea-shore. I believe my first impression of the sea came from that. The coming on of a storm is always associated with it. I always fancy that it is bringing with it something beside the tempest,—that there is something ruinous behind it."

"That is more fanciful than you usually are," said Isabella; "but, alas! I cannot remember your story, for I never read it."

"That is where your education and Celia's was fearfully neglected," said Lawrence; "you were not brought up on fairy stories and Mother Goose. You have not needed the first, as Celia has; but Mother Goose would have given a tone to your way of thinking that is certainly wanting."

A little while afterwards, Isabella stood upon the balcony steps leading from the drawing-room. Otho was with her. The threatening clouds had driven almost every one into the house. There was distant thunder and lightning; but through the cloud-rifts, now and then, the moonlight streamed down. Isabella and Otho had been talking earnestly,—so earnestly, that they were quite unobservant of the coming storm, of the strange, lurid light that hung around.

"It is strange that this should take place here!" said Isabella,—"that just here I should learn that you love me! Strange that my destiny should be completed in this spot!"

"And this spot has its strange associations with me," said Otho, "of which I must some time speak to you. But now I can think only of the present. Now, for the first time, do I feel what life is,—now that you have promised to be mine!"

Otho was interrupted by a sudden cry. He turned to find his mother standing behind him.

"You are here with Isabella! she has promised herself to you!" she exclaimed. "It is a fatality, a terrible fatality! Listen, Isabella! You are the Queen of the Red Chessmen; and he, Otho, is the King of the White Chessmen,—and I, their Queen. Can there be two queens? Can there be a marriage between two hostile families? Do you not see, if there were a marriage between the Reds and the Whites, there were no game? Look! I have found our old prison! The pieces would all be here,—but we, we are missing! Would you return to the imprisonment of this poor box,—to your old mimic life? No, my children, go back! Isabella, marry this Lawrence Egerton, who loves you. You will find what life is, then. Leave Otho, that he may find this same life also."

Isabella stood motionless.

"Otho, the White Prince! Alas! where is my hatred? But life without him! Even stagnation were better! I must needs be captive to the White Prince!"

She stretched out her hand to Otho. He seized it passionately. At this moment there was a grand crash of thunder. A gust of wind extinguished at once all the lights in the drawing-room. The terrified guests hurried into the hall, into the other rooms.

"The lightning must have struck the house!" they exclaimed.

A heavy rain followed; then all was still. Everybody began to recover his spirits. The servants relighted the candles. The drawing-room was found untenanted. It was time to go; yet there was a constraint upon all the party, who were eager to find their hostess and bid her good-by.

But the hostess could not be found! Isabella and

Otho, too, were missing! The Doctor and Lawrence went everywhere, calling for them, seeking them in the house, in the grounds. They were nowhere to be found,—neither that night nor the next day, nor ever afterwards!

The Doctor found in the balcony a box of chessmen fallen down. It was nearly filled; but the red queen, and the white king and queen, were lying at a little distance. In the box was the red king, his crown fallen from his head, himself broken in pieces. The Doctor took up the red queen, and carried it home.

"Are you crazy?" asked his wife. "What are you going to do with that red queen?"

But the Doctor placed the figure on his study-table and often gazed at it wistfully.

Whenever, afterwards, as was often the case, any one suggested a new theory to account for the mysterious disappearance of Isabella and the Blanchards, the Doctor looked at the carved image on his table and was silent.

The danger of mental culture when carried too far has often been set forth. The following picturesque illustration of this danger is by Luke Sharp, and is taken from the *Detroit Free Press* for the benefit of the readers of ROMANCE.

A MEMORY LESSON.

I WAS sitting in my room in the *Free Press* building the other day, working hard, with my feet on the desk, when the doorway darkened and I looked up. There stood, with a hand on each of the door-posts, a most disreputable-looking specimen of a man. I saw instantly that he was a drunkard, and made up my mind that he wanted twenty-five cents.

In this I was wrong, as it shows how a person should be slow in coming to an opinion about an unknown fellow-creature. He wanted only ten cents.

"Say, mister," he said, "you don't happen to have ten cents you could spare?"

"You have struck it the first time. I don't."

"Say, mister, I haven't had anything to eat for twenty-four hours."

"Then why don't you go and have dinner? There are some first-class hotels in this town."

"Are they? Now, commercial travellers have told me that they can't get a decent meal in the city. I'll halve the difference with you. Make it five cents, boss."

"I can't keep myself in lager, and you expect me to supply with beer any tramp that comes along."

The fellow coolly came in and sat down.

"I see you are mistaken in my character. I have never tasted a drop of liquor in my life. I was at one time in one of the best wholesale houses in this town, but was ruined by my desire for improvement. I was often warned that I was taking the wrong course, but, alas! I did not see my error until it was too late. Most of my comrades used to take a glass of beer now and

then and go to the base-ball games and be out nights, but I stuck to study, and you see what I am."

I was a little bewildered at this. It seemed to be reversing the preconceived ideas I had on the subject, and I weakly allowed the fellow to proceed.

"Yes, I am now an awful example of the terrible folly of taking a wrong course. My beer-drinking companions are pointed to as model citizens, while I am practically a tramp."

"How did it happen?"

"Well, the finishing stroke was the memory lessons. I had naturally a good memory, and my firm told me that if I learned to speak French they would send me to Paris as their agent there. I pitched into French, and was advised to take memory lessons, as that was a great help in acquiring a language."

"And was it?"

"In a way—yes. You know how they strengthen the memory, I suppose?"

"No. Never heard it could be done."

"Well, the first thing they do they make you swear an awful oath you will never divulge any of the methods, and then you have to sign a bond to that effect with a heavy penalty attached."

"Then if I were you I would not tell anything about it. I don't care to know."

"Oh, that's all right. I can plead that I have forgotten all about the oath. That is one of the benefits of the memory system. You can forget anything so easily. Yes, sir. Now, if you lent me $5 I would very likely forget all about it before to-morrow."

"You astonish me."

"It's quite true. In that way the system is very valuable. Now to show you how the thing works. My girl's name——"

"Oh, you have a girl, then?"

"Had, my dear fellow—had."

"Excuse me if I have brought up sad recollections."

"It don't matter in the least, I assure you. You see, I can forget it right away."

"Well, about the system?"

"Oh, yes; I forgot. What were we talking about?"

"You said your girl's name was——"

"Exactly. My girl's name was——" Here his brows wrinkled up and he said to himself audibly:

"Girl— dress— dressmaker—thread—spool—cotton—cotton mill—spinner—bobbin—bob—Robert—Roberta. That's it. Her name was Roberta—nice girl, too."

"What was her last name? Let me see." Here he fell into the same sort of an audible brown study and murmured: "Roberta—Robert—Bob—bobbin—cotton—factory—mill—mills. That's it again. Mills is the name; Miss Mills. Let's see; what did I say her first name was? Girl—dress—dressmaker——"

"Never mind going over that again. You said her name was Roberta."

"You're right—Roberta Mills; awfully nice girl, too. She lives in Windsor. Know her?"

"No, I don't."

"Well, she's lost to me forever. I don't know that it matters now. I have rarely the money to pay the ferry fare, and if I had I might spend it otherwise."

"I don't doubt it. How did the separation come about?"

"Memory system did it. I suppose you understand the system now?"

"I can't say that I do."

"Well, you see, you corral any word you want to remember."

"I have heard of corralling an animal, but——"

"Same thing, my boy—same thing. You get a word up in a corner, so that it can't escape you. That is where the system comes in so good in learning French. Now, for instance, supposing you want the French for water. You corral the two words together. Water makes you think of whiskey, doesn't it?"

"Natural combination."

"Of course it is. Now, whiskey makes you think of drunk. A man who is addicted to drink naturally neglects his business and runs in debt?"

"Quite correct."

"Then drunk recalls debt, see? Well, a man who is in debt owes everybody, doesn't he?"

"If they are foolish enough to trust him—yes."

"Very well, then, there you have it. Water—whiskey—drunk—debt—owe—eau, French for water. Easy as rolling off a log. Now, to put this system to use, suppose your wife gave you a letter to post."

"You may as well suppose something probable while you're at it. She wouldn't do it. She knows I'd forget it."

"Well, I'm just supposing a case. You remember that you have forgotten what your wife told you to do. You say wife—that reminds you of expense—expense recalls cash—cash means money—time is money. So you think of time—time makes you think of a slugging match——"

"What's that?"

"Why, a fight where they call 'time.' The match suggests betting. There you are at 'bet.' Betting is against the law, so you have 'law.' But betting is only against the letter of the law, the statute is not enforced, so you have 'letter,' and then you go and post it."

"Wonderful. Still, it seems to me that it would be easier to remember the letter itself than do all that."

"So it would if you were not a victim of this system, but once that gets a hold on you, you can't remember anything unless you corral the words. That's how I came to lose my situation."

"Oh! How did that happen?"

"Well, a man by the name of—of"—here he murmured a lot of words to himself, and then brightening up, said: "Smith—by the name of Smith, telephoned me to tell my boss, as soon as he came in, to call him up. There is the telephone. That suggested 'ring,' ring naturally brought to my mind 'aldermen'"——

"How is that? I don't see that."

"Why, the aldermen always form rings and the fellow who wants to get anything has to pay the ring."

"You don't tell me?"

"Fact. Well, ring shows that a man is a fool who expects things to be otherwise; fool suggests idiot; idiot suggests asylum; asylum, prison; a prison is a workshop; a workshop must have a blacksmith shop; such a shop must have a smith, and there you are. Well, when the boss came in I went up to him working on the corral, and said: 'Ring—alderman—fool—idiot'—but before I got to 'prison' I was kicked into the street."

"That was unfortunate. Why didn't you go back and explain?"

"I have often started out to do so, but I always forgot it before I could get there."

"And I suppose that because you lost your situation you lost your girl."

"Oh, no. I had forgotten about that. Glad you reminded me. No, that was a case of a good corral going wrong. It sometimes does that. I went over to see her and was working the corral for all it was worth. I ran it this way: 'Girl—dress—dressmaker—sewing—thread—needle—pins—pinafore—Josephine."

"I don't see how you get that last word."

"Why, Josephine is the principal character in 'Pinafore,' you know. Well, when I met her I said, 'Halloo, Josephine,' and she thought I was thinking of another girl, and then it was all day with me. You see, I should have gone on 'spools' from 'thread,' and instead I went on 'needles,' and of course, when a man gets on needles you can't tell at which girl you will bring up."

"Well, I am sorry for you. I have been very much interested in your case. I never knew there were any memory systems in existence. Here is half a dollar for your trouble."

"I am very much obliged to you, I assure you. Won't you come out and have something?"

"No, thank you. I never drink."

"Oh, that's so. Neither do I. I had forgotten. You see, I forget everything."

"That's all right; good by."

I noticed on looking out of the window that he didn't forget to go into the saloon on the corner.

Students of natural history will be interested in the following story as it is related by E. Carazza, and originally published in the *Portland Transcript.*

A MERMAN OF MAINE.

"I AM persuaded," said Mr. John Josselyn, "not less by my own experience than by the wonderful stories of voyagers and of scholars, that there may be many strange things in the world. For the sea is—as hath been well said—a parent of prodigies, and I conceive the earth, also, to be a father of marvels. There be a sort of stagnant spirits which—sitting in the chair of the scornful over their whifts and draughts of intoxication, will desperately censure the relations of the greatest travellers. But as for me, I will wonder, for I am not minded to be a fool."

Mr. Josselyn, in that summer of 1638, was lately come to New England. He had disembarked at Noddle's Island; and from there crossed by ferry to Boston, in those days a village of a score or so of houses. There he paid his respects to Governor Winthrop and to Mr. Cotton, the Teacher of Boston church, to whom he also consigned a packet from the ingenious Mr. Quarles, containing several new translations from the psalms.

Now Mr. Josselyn was come to Black Point, several miles from the settlement of Casco which was to be later called Portland. At that time the oddly shaped peninsula of Casco was divided between three landholders: Mr. George Cleeves, the first settler, and his son-in-law, Mr. Michael Mitton—who dwelt on wooded hills, one overlooking the open bay, the other an arm of the sea—and Mr. Richard Tucker, who occupied the valley which lay between those hills, a rough land, where streams meandered between granite ledges.

These gentlemen, with Mr. Cammock, Mr. Foxwell, and one or two others, were come to the house of Mr.

Josselyn's brother, to pay a visit of welcome to the stranger, and over mugs of beer and flip had been entertaining him with stories of the new land. He was a naturalist of much learning for those days, when science did not discredit the most extraordinary stories, but was content to believe in a strange and shadowy world of the unknown toward which it projected its dreams and its researches.

So Mr. Josselyn listened eagerly to Mr. Cammock's description of "an admirable rare creature, in shape like a buck, with horns, of a gummy substance, to be found in autumn among withered leaves; but seldom or never to be found whole, only the head and horns, or the hinder parts, broken off from the rest. And the Indians do believe that if they could see a tree-buck walking on the branches of an oak, they would have good luck in hunting, that day."

To this, Mr. Josselyn only observed that he could neither impeach nor enforce the story, but would satisfy himself with the saying of a wise knight, that there are many stranger things in the world than are to be seen between London and Stanes.

Mr. Foxwell then related an adventure of his own: "I having sailed," said he, "in a shallop eastward as far as Cape Anna-waggen, was on my return overtaken by the night, and fearing to land upon the barbarous shore, put off a little further to sea. About midnight we were wakened with a loud voice from the shore, calling upon 'Foxwell, Foxwell, come ashore,' two or three times; upon the sands we saw a great fire and men and women hand in hand dancing round about it in a ring. After an hour or two they vanished, and as soon as the day appeared we put into a small cove (it being about three-quarters flood) and traced along the shore, where we found the footing of men, women, and children, shod with shoes, and an infinite number of brands' ends thrown up by the water, but neither Indians nor English could we meet with on the shore nor in the woods."

"This," said Mr. Josselyn, "is a very fine story, which

may be called an ensample or taster of the supernatural, for which reasons it pleases me even better than my brother's story of a young lion killed not long since by an Indian at Piscataway, or Mr. Foxwell's other relation of a sea-serpent or snake quoiled up like a cable upon a rock at Cape Ann—for though these do contradict our knowledge of beasts, that doth surpass our acquaintance with mankind."

"Now, neighbor Mitton," said Mr. Tucker, "is the time to tell your story of a merman. We are now at the point of expectancy in relations; we sit here in good care and company, while out-o'-doors the thunders will bear a plainsong to your descant of adventure."

"Brother Tucker," said Mr. Mitton, "I had delivered my story sooner, but it is now an old tale. At Casco and here at Black Point, and also with Mr. Winter and his men at Richmond's Island, it has been often repeated, not wearing away to be the lesser in the telling."

"'Twill be news to me, sir," urged Mr. Josselyn.

"Then take my story, with my good-will to you," responded Mr. Mitton, touching his tankard to that of Mr. Josselyn. "I am somewhat of a fowler; and one morning in April, before the sun was up, I had gone in a canoe to shoot ducks. The air was shrewd and humid, but with such a mist as promised a fine day. I was fetchnig a compass around a small island—there being many small islands in the bay—when I was of a sudden encountered of a Triton or merman. The darkness of the hour forbade me to scan his countenance, whether angry or benevolent; but he laying his hands on the side of the canoe, I chopped with my hatchet at one of them, which was in all respects—it seemed to me—like the hand of a man. The Triton presently sunk, dyeing the water with his purple blood, and was no more seen."

"That, sir," cried Mr. Josselyn, "caps the other stories."

"I hope," concluded Mr. Mitton, "that if the merman meant me no ill, I may have done him small harm. But we are come into a strange land, Master Josselyn, and what with Indians and wild beasts and other bug-

bears, we have often need, as is the saying, of a little armor well placed."

Soon after Mr. Mitton's story the company bade each other good-night; yet not good-by, for the men were to remain at the house until the next day. A visit was no trifle in those times, nor was a journey of a half score of miles through the dense forest a saunter for an idle hour. The heavy thunder had cleared the air and the morning was fine and warm when the men from Casco returned to their homes.

Three days later, Mr. Mitton came to bring Mr. Josselyn for a visit to Casco. Observing that the stranger's face was slightly swollen near the mouth, he said:

"I hope, sir, that the enlargement of your countenance be not by reason of toothache. If so, my wife will have some herb to lay to it."

"I came by it in this wise: In the afternoon, after your visit, I walked into the woods on the back side of the house, and happening into a fine broad walk, which was a sledge-way, I wandered till I chanced to spy a fruit, as I thought, like a pineapple flaked with scales. It was as big as the crown of a woman's hat. I made bold to step unto it with an intent to have gathered it. No sooner had I touched it than hundreds of wasps were about me. At last, I cleared myself from them, being stung only by one on the upper lip; but by that time I was come into the house my lip was swelled so extremely that they hardly knew me but by my garments."

Mr. Mitton expressed his pity for the case, the more aptly since he himself had once knocked at the door of a house of hornets, who, being at home, gave him a warm welcome.

As the two men traversed the country between Black Point and Casco, they found fresh objects of interest. The soil was in some places sandy, with a growth of hemlock and pine; elsewhere richer, and covered with oak, birch, and ash, and a tangled underbrush of ferns and vines. They discoursed on these and their uses,

Mr. Mitton speaking as a practical settler, and Mr. Josselyn as a traveller eager to discover new species or identify those known in his own country. He noted the juniper with its sky-colored berries; the black currants in pretty bunches; the sarsaparilla, for the curing of wounds, and many more, including the mandrake, which he could not agree to be the "amiable and sweet-smelling flower" spoken of in Genesis, as gathered by Reuben.

Mr. Mitton boasted of the great number of fish in the bay, and those that in spring ascended the streams, where it was known that two men had once caught, in as many hours, no less than 10,000 alewives.

From the little mosquitoes, by which Mr. Josselyn said he was "strangely incommodated," to the lordly moose, called by him "a monster of superfluity," no creature escaped the attention of the traveller, who noted all for the book that he intended to write. By fortune, they passed a wigwam, at whose doorway stood a young squaw, pounding maize, and dressed in her cloth mantle, with girdle and ornaments of beads, and in sleeves and buskins of deerskin. Mr. Josselyn's admiration broke into poetry, which he repeated aloud to Mr. Mitton, saying:

"These verses were made some time since, upon the picture of a young and handsome gypsy, but seem not improperly transferred upon the Indian squaw, tricked up in all her bravery:

> Maugre then all that can be said
> In flattery of white and red;
> These flatterers themselves must say
> That darkness was before the day;
> And such perfection here appears
> It neither wind nor sunshine fears."

Mr. Mitton, meanwhile, asked the squaw for some water, which she brought in a birch-bark dish, and he gave her some leaden bullets that pleased her very much.

The walk, long and difficult, had been so enlivened that Mr. Josselyn was quite surprised when, after climb-

ing a slope, they reached a clearing, sheltered by a thick woods behind it, where stood a house between a garden and a corn-field.

"Welcome to my home," said Mr. Mitton.

As they approached the door, Mrs. Mitton, a tall and beautiful woman, appeared with her baby in her arms and three little daughters at her skirts. She repeated the welcome. Mr. Josselyn, who had not exhausted in praise of the squaw his stock of courtly compliments, bowed to her, saying, "I am amazed, madam, to find Venus, with Cupid, her little son, attended by the graces, in this strange and savage new land."

After supper, he admired the apron of white silk which she was working with flowers. "It may, sir," she said, "appear a task mad as his who would make coats for the moon, to broider an apron of silk here, where serge is fitter. But 'tis less for the wearing than for the pleasure of recalling the days when I wore such things in England, when I had the years of Nan here. Nor I would not have her nor Mary nor little Bess without somewhat of the gentler arts of the needle."

"Madam," replied the polite Mr. Josselyn, "of your needlework truly it cannot be said that

'Art stood amazed in ambiguity,'

for anything plainer I never saw nor prettier than these clove-pinks wrought in red and green, a knop and a flower, a knop and a flower. One might be deceived to smell to them."

The samplers of the little girls were then brought out and praised; and, as the twilight odors came in from the fields and the woods, Mrs. Mitton offered to show Mr. Josselyn her garden.

"That," she said, "is our corn-field, and near are cabbages and beans and pumpkins, the care of my good man and his servants. There are some fruit-trees, plums, apples, and cherries, of which I make conserves. But I am all for my posies; the hedge of clipt wild rose-bushes; the bed of clove-pinks—I took my pattern from them for my needle; here are violets, but 'tis past

their time of bloom; here are lavender for the linen, and other herbs, basil, and rue, and rosemary or herb of grace. Over this bed of gilly-flowers, see the colibris flitting, like sped souls of jewels; they are also called the rising or waking bird, and are an emblem of the Resurrection, and the wonder of all little birds. That cry is the good-night of the redbreast thrush, and in this thorn-bush my Nan found a nest of filladies. The kindest bird of all is the chimney-swallow—you may see them now, darting back and forth by the eaves. When they go away, they never fail to throw down one of their young birds into the room by way of gratitude. And it has often been observed that against the ruin of a family, these birds will forsake the house and come no more. So is it that simple creatures sometimes forebode what is to be."

"And like Cassandra, are not heeded," rejoined the ingenious Mr. Josselyn.

Then the little company re-entered the house; and soon all was darkness and silence, but for the stars in heaven, the fireflies in the garden and field, and the alternate breathing of the ocean and the woods.

II.

The next morning, at breakfast, Mr. Mitton said jestingly:

"Here's madam Bess my wife says the larder will lack fish if host and guest go not forth in the canoe to take some."

"You will always have your jest, Michael," she said. "Do you take pleasure in such things, Mr. Josselyn?"

"Jests or fishing—all's my pleasure, madam," he answered cordially.

So, equipped with fishing tackle, the two men went down to the shore. There, drawn up on the pebbly beach, among some alders, was a canoe; and Mr. Mitton, having launched it into the shallows, bade his guest enter it.

"Have a care to be well placed, sir, for in the middle

you will go very safely—as the Latin has it—else you are in jeopardy in the boat."

For some reason, the fish that morning were absent or wary. Little by little, the brilliant sunshine became clouded and ceased to make the bay sparkle with innumerable points of gold ; the islands, too, changed their vivid green for blackish tints of shadow spread over their rocks and pine groves. At some distance, near a steep promontory, the sea showed a blue wind-streak, but Mr. Mitton—a man of daring, and much annoyed by the monotony of pioneer existence—had no thought to turn back for fear of a gale. He was looking toward the wind-streak, and the foam that broke below the cliff, when he gave a start that tilted the canoe and a cry, "The Triton! The Triton!"

Indeed, amid the water, at some distance, appeared a dark head like that of a man, crowned with a red cap such as a foreign sailor might wear. As the men looked, the Triton dived, remaining under water long enough to have drowned a Christian twice over (as Mr. Mitton said), then came to the surface, and seemed to beckon with one hand to the boat, tossing at the same time a fish into the air.

"'Tis a good creature, and a forgiving," said Mr. Mitton. "A plague upon my hatchet, that it should have clapped upon a hand kinder than my own. I would I had not shed a drop of his blood. See, he beckons again to us!"

The two men paddled toward the Triton, who receded, keeping his distance. When they reached the place where he had first appeared, they stopped, let down their lines, and soon drew in abundance of cod and haddock fish; while the merman lay upon a low reef, almost submerged, little but his red cap showing above the brown seaweed heaped about him like cushions.

"What say you now, Mr. Josselyn, of my Triton or merman?"

"It hath been said, that everything on earth, the like thereof is in the sea. And certainly, then, we should expect to find in it men and women. The Greek

Ulysses—his ears stopped with wax and he bound to a mast—saw sirens or mermaids; and other travellers have told of the fathers of these singing women, the Tritons or mermen. Could we get speech of him, think you?"

The sea-birds that had hovered over the shoal of fish, now and then descending for prey, now began to shriek and fly toward the rocks of the islands. The merman slipped from his reef, and swam fast toward a narrow wooded cove. Down came a sudden flaw of wind, the sea whitening and fleeing before it; the waves flung themselves upward to meet the rain that descended in sheets; the air was full of the rush and roar of the tempest, as the canoe, paddled desperately by Mr. Mitton and Mr. Josselyn, was driven into the cove where the Triton had taken refuge. Here, to their surprise, they saw a fisher's hut near the beach, and a man and a boy hastening to their aid. The charitable islanders led them to the hut, where on the hearth burned a bright fire, and a woman stirred a kettle of boiling samp, while a little girl rocked a year-old baby in a rough cradle. The guests were given seats by the fire, and bowls of the warm samp, with milk poured over. News was exchanged; and it proved that the islander was one Leonard Cary, who had been employed in making staves by Mr. Winter—the agent of Mr. Trelawny of Plymouth, England—at Richmond's Island. Because of a long illness, Cary was disabled from his trade; and now maintained his family as best he could, with the help of his boy, fishing or tilling a bit of rocky land behind the hut.

As they talked, there came a dull sound from outside the door, a knock, with a sliding and flapping noise. "'Tis Tony, dear Tony!" cried little Meg, running to open the door.

Mr. Mitton nearly let fall his dish of samp, for he who entered was—the Triton. First appeared his round dark head and red cap, then he came rolling and crawling across the floor.

Mrs. Cary laughed. "Never fear, sirs, 'tis a civil

beast and will harm no one. A poor silly seal is Tony; but the children are fond of him, for they raised him from a weanling. My son Thomas found him in this cove, lying on the breast of his dead mother—a pretty sight, sirs, but one to draw tears, for these seals are like Christian folk in love for their young. And we could neither do aught for the mother, nor know how she came by her death. But we took the cub, making a she-goat its nurse. And if Meg here is mad enough to trick out the poor beast's head with an old woollen night-cap of her father's, do not think that the seal be any such fool. For he is a wise creature, and goes a-fishing with Thomas, who has even schooled him to bring fish to the boat, giving him for his part a tithe of what he brings. Tony had a sore, wounded flipper in April, but 'tis quite whole now."

The baby had now rolled out of his cradle —a hollowed log, rocking on its own roundness—and was caressing Tony with coos of joy, while Meg carefully untied the scarlet cap. Mr. Mitton and Mr. Josselyn exchanged glances. Meanwhile, the squall was passed as suddenly as it arose; the sun shone upon the leaping waves, and the rain-wet woods of the islands glistened. The guests arose to depart.

"Mistress Cary," said Michael Mitton, "I cannot requite you, nor I will not try, for your kindness to us. A place beside an honorable hearth, a share of the family meal, and the welcome of kind souls, are favors for which a man is beholden with his service and his life. But I will ask that, for our sakes, your babe bite on a piece of gold, a-breeding of his teeth. And I shall not forget my neighbors, Samaritans of the sea, if ever any were."

And Mr. Mitton and Mr. Josselyn took from their purses more than one gold coin, which they, stooping, put into the baby's lap. He took them calmly, with no notion that they were worth more than clam-shells; neither did the soft black eyes of Tony, the seal, appear to catch any gleams from the gold.

Leonard and Thomas Cary went down to the beach

with their guests, while Mrs. Cary and Meg stood in the doorway.

On the homeward way, Mr. Mitton was unusually silent; and Mr. Josselyn asked him with a smile:

"Are you sorry because your marvellous Triton or merman is naught but a common phoca or seal?"

"Not only so," replied Mr. Mitton, "but I am, moreover, sorely perplexed to know my duty, whether to confess or to cloak my error. If I openly avow myself my own fancy's fool, having never set eyes on a true Triton or merman, but only upon a sea-beast, all the people who have heard my story will make me their music."

"I am confident," noted Mr. Josselyn, "that the phoca, sea-calf or seal, is the very monster spoken of by Jeremy, in Lamentations, the fourth chapter and third verse."

"Jeremy me no Jeremys!" cried Mr. Mitton, "for I am shrewdly distressed in my mind. I am no saint, even somewhat of a roisterer, but I love to tell the truth. And yet if I shall make known that I was not encountered of a Triton or merman, my wife's father, Cleeves, will not make an end of gibes, and R. Tucker, who hath a nimble wit, will make me his music; and all the others after, like hounds in cry. Indeed, Master Josselyn, I am glad you are in my company and none other, for you are a discreet gentleman, and, moreover, not of these parts. What, say you, must I do?"

Mr. Josselyn thought for a minute; then gave his judgment:

"I consider, that since no one has been hurt in person or fame by your story, but rather it has given matter for amazement and pleasure; and (secondly) inasmuch as you spoke in good faith; and (thirdly) that Ulysses the Greek and many other travellers, and the wise Pliny and others after him, have declared that there be sea-folk, you are not bound to bear witness against the existence of such a monster. Neither, I consider, is a man required to know, amid-sea, a phoca crowned with a woollen night-cap. Lastly, you are esteemed for

sake of Mr. Cleeves and for your own; and it were amiss your credit be lessened by a poor sea-monster. Therefore, in my conscience I should quit you of the need of confession, unless it were to Mistress Mitton."

"If my wife hear the story, the other women will soon have it."

"Then keep it locked within your own breast. But I think you should apprise Mistress Mitton of the straits of the poor Carys. For a woman hath a way to pour in balm where man's rude hands do but hurt."

"My Bess will rejoice to comfort their poverty. And I am glad that the seal was not greatly harmed; he is a good creature, and meant me only well, surely, in laying hands on my boat."

. . . . . .

From that time forth, Mr. Mitton often visited the island hut, sometimes accompanied by his wife or one of his daughters, and never without gifts from their comparative wealth to the need of the family of Leonard Cary. And it was pretty to see Tony flip and roll down the beach, and swim out to meet the boat. Yet for more than two hundred years the whole story has remained unwritten, for Mr. John Josselyn was faithful to his trust, and you shall search in vain in his book of voyages for more of the story of the Triton or Merman than was commonly told along the coast of Casco.

Temptation presents itself in various guises to man, but rarely in that which Dr. Hendon was called to resist. What it was and how he met it was related in London *Truth*, and from that journal was transferred to ROMANCE.

DR. HENDON'S TEMPTATION.

HERBERT HENDON, M.D., was fond of his profession, but he was a good deal fonder of horseflesh. The tenth year of his London practice found him making a very considerable income; but, grievous to relate, by far the largest proportion of that income found its way, year by year, into the coffers of the bookmaking fraternity.

Never yet had he been a defaulter on settling-day, but this had only been rendered possible by ignoring his tradespeople's demands. There was no blinking the fact that he was considerably involved, and did not see any way of escaping the Bankruptcy Court, save by some great and successful *coup*.

It was in 1887, just a week before Watts steered Merry Hampton to his Derby victory, that Herbert Hendon entered his consulting-room, and rang his bell for the first patient to be shown in. He felt terribly down on his luck, for he had got what he believed to be a splendid tip for the great race, but knew not where to turn for money. He was in anything but a proper frame of mind to do justice to his patients on this particular morning.

However, as the door opened, he pulled himself together, rose, and stepped forward with his usual bland welcome.

A young man entered, and, proffering his hand, sunk with an air of much lassitude into the chair to which the doctor motioned him. He was tall and very spare, with hollow chest, and his face an unwholesome pasty color. His breathing came short and sharp, and Dr. Hendon saw at a glance that this was anything but one of his "bread-pill" cases.

He listened attentively as his patient described his symptoms, and then proceeded to subject him to a rigorous examination. To make a long story short, he discovered that Gordon Paston was suffering from a practically incurable disease, and that the only thing to do was to prolong the few short years that were left to him to their utmost limit. He did not, of course, tell his patient this. He merely hinted that the disorder might grow into something serious unless great care were taken with it, and that he hoped, after the course of treatment to which he proposed to subject him, that he would be able to set him on his legs again. He then wrote out a prescription, gave him a list of foods to be avoided, and expressed a wish to see him again in a week's time, after which he rose from his seat as a hint to his patient to be going, but Gordon Paston still sat on in his chair.

"Doctor Hendon," he said, after a moment's pause, "I hope you will excuse me when I tell you that I know very well what is the matter with me. I know, too, that you, with very proper kindness, have made light of the fatal disease from which I am suffering. I know, from more than one doctor, that it is only a question of keeping me alive for a few years. No, please, do not protest, but kindly hear me out in what I have to say. I do not want to pretend to you that I look with unconcern upon approaching death. Far from it. I am immensely enamoured of life, and my capacity for enjoying it is as strong as ever. Now, I hope you will forgive me for the proposal I am about to make. I am a poor man—that is to say, my income is about £300 a year. My tastes are somewhat extravagant, and that is far from sufficient to satisfy them. My little income is derived from an invested £8000, my absolute property. Now, what I propose to do is to apportion that capital sum to the remaining years of my life, of course with a sufficient margin to allow of my disappointing the undertakers for a bit, and to pay my just debts and funeral expenses. My only sister is married and very well off, so that I feel perfectly justi-

fied in leaving as few assets as I like. So you see, doctor, what I want you to do is to give me the very latest date up to which it is possible for me, under the most favorable circumstances, to live. Please do not be afraid of telling me the shortness of my tether, for you see, the shorter time I have, the more merrily I shall be at liberty to squander my £8000."

To say that Dr. Hendon was amazed at the calm calculation with which this man contemplated the near approach of death, would be overstating the case. It takes a good deal to astonish a doctor who has been in continuous practice for ten years. But it was the first time in his life that a patient had begged him not to hesitate to fix an absolute period beyond which it was impossible for him to live, and he felt somewhat embarrassed at the request.

His patient noticed his hesitation, and said that perhaps he would like to give some further consideration to his case, as the issues were somewhat momentous. He would, if he wished, call again for the verdict the following morning.

This was finally agreed upon, and Dr. Hendon felt relieved at the postponement of what was to him a very unpleasant responsibility. The next day Gordon Paston was again his first visitor, and the doctor subjected him to a further careful examination.

He then sat down and faced his patient.

"Your case, Mr. Paston," he said, speaking with deliberation, "is a peculiarly easy one for prognosis. The disease from which you are suffering invariably terminates fatally, as you are aware, and its duration can be predicted with the greatest confidence. Of course, in every disease, all modifying influences must be taken into consideration. Your age, your calm, philosophical state of mind, are all in your favor. An hysterical woman would probably be dead in twelve months. I think it is possible that you may live for three years, but extremely improbable that you can last for four. Indeed, I am convinced that four years is a

very wide margin to give you. I have spoken plainly, believing that your desire was for strict candor."

Gordon Paston listened attentively to every word, and Dr. Hendon could not but admire the unmoved countenance with which he received his death sentence.

There was a short pause, and then the victim spoke.

"Your verdict, doctor, is much what I expected, and I hope you will forgive me when I tell you that I think you are mistaken in your estimate. Whether it is that I have a peculiarly sanguine temperament, I know not, but, although five doctors at least have told me the same, most, indeed, giving me even a shorter tether, I feel it impossible to believe in so speedy a termination to my life. Were it not so, my course would be clear. I should year by year sell out a thousand pounds' worth of my investments, and spend that sum in addition to the income accruing from the remainder, but, incredulous as I am, I feel that I dare not run the risk of finding myself penniless if I should survive my appointed time. Now, I have a proposal to make to you, doctor, somewhat of a sporting nature. I want to ask you to back your opinion against mine. I hope you will not think me impertinent, but it would ease my mind greatly if you would fall in with my suggestion."

He paused a moment, but Dr. Hendon motioned him to proceed, half guessing in his mind what the proposal was to be.

"Now, you say, doctor, that I cannot by any possibility live more than four years, and consequently that, spending £1500 a year, I shall not at most run through more than three-fourths of my capital. Are you then prepared, for the sum of £8000 down, to guarantee to pay me £1500 a year for the rest of my natural life? According to your estimate, you are sure of clearing at least £2000, and very possibly a good deal more; and, further, you will relieve me of a very great anxiety. £1500 a year is ample for my wants. What do you say, doctor—is it a bargain?"

Gordon Paston little guessed as he spoke what a godsend this seemed to the doctor. With £8000 down,

not only could he satisfy all his creditors, but, what was more tempting, he would have available money in plenty to back his fancy for the Derby.

The long and short of it was that, after some discussion, a formal document was drawn up and signed, and £8000 was handed over by Mr. Gordon Paston to Dr. Herbert Hendon, in consideration of the latter undertaking to pay to the former, for the rest of his natural life, the sum of £1500 per annum, to take effect from June 1, 1887.

As a further security, a guarantee was obtained from a complaisant brother of the doctor, who undertook to be answerable for the due performance of this undertaking in case he should fail to carry it out.

Dr. Hendon had proposed that the amount should be paid quarterly, but Gordon Paston had insisted upon the whole £1500 being paid him down once a year, and that on June 1. So it was that the recurrence of that date came to be of considerable importance to both persons of our drama.

And the doctor backed his fancy heavily for the 1887 Derby; but, unfortunately for him, his money was not on "Merry Hampton."

. . . . . .

Nearly four years had passed, and the £8000 had long ago found its way, in company with a very large proportion of his professional income, into the pockets of Dr. Hendon's creditors. During that period the passion for gambling that was in his blood had led him to speculate in the City, and where before he had risked hundreds upon pigmies in pigskins, now he risked thousands in gold mines guiltless of gold, and in the stock of corporations which only had an existence, like the world of the transcendentalist, in the brains of men.

Gordon Paston was now in the last stages of his disease, but there was little doubt that he would live over June 1, when another £1500 would be due to him.

Between him and Dr. Hendon, during these three years, there had sprung up a very close and intimate friendship. Indeed, excepting the latter's financial

difficulties, they hardly had an interest which they did not communicate. Gordon Paston was a man of exceptional culture, intensely sympathetic, and in touch with the intellectual and artistic movement of the times, though unable, on account of his failing strength, to associate actively, as he would have loved to do, with the men and women who were workers. Dr. Hendon, on the other hand, was essentially the man of action—a platform speaker, a diner-out, a man who made his presence felt on councils and committees. He was the true complement to his friend and patient, and the happiest hours of both were spent in each other's company.

Often and often during the past year, when his strength had been more rapidly failing, had Gordon Paston forced his friend to the discussion of the physical aspect of death, and more than once he had insisted that when the last pangs came on, and all joy of living was inevitably passed, there might be a more unfriendly action than that of a gentle and painless acceleration.

It was in the last weeks of May, 1891, that Dr. Hendon found himself involved in the most hopeless financial difficulty. Tradesmen were growing clamorous. Bankruptcy proceedings were threatening him on all sides, and, to crown all, the £1500, due on June 1 to his dying friend, had to be found.

More than once, Gordon Paston, all-unconscious as he was of Hendon's financial difficulties, had laughingly said to him that he would do him out of another year's income. Indeed, the last time they had met, he had said:—

"Mind, old fellow, you have your check written for the 1st," and Herbert Hendon had sworn that nothing should make him forget it.

And as he had left the house he had said to himself with a groan,

"Would to God I was in that dear man's place; but thank God he is not in mine! Hell can, indeed, begin this side the grave."

On the 25th of May, just a week before the fatal day, he was paying his daily visits.

Gordon Paston was now failing rapidly. Indeed, for the last two months it had been evident that the end was approaching. His sister, Mrs. Fairfax, was in constant attendance upon him.

"Hendon," he said, as soon as they were alone that evening, "I have a little matter of business I want to speak about to you. My sister, Mrs. Fairfax, has been most awfully good to me, and I should like much to give her a little pleasant surprise. Now, you know, as I told you four years ago, I felt justified, because of her husband's wealth, in not having any money available at my death for legacies. But, as a matter of fact, one of her boys is a godson of mine, and I think it would gratify her immensely if I presented her with the sum of £1500, which will be due to me from you on the 1st of June, for the boy. Do you see?"

"I see," said the doctor, with a chill at his heart.

"And, old fellow," continued Gordon, "I want you to do me the favor of writing me your check now, post-dating it, of course, for June 1st—this day week. I should like to have it by me ready to put into her hand on the morning of that day."

"Oh, certainly," said Hendon, for he felt, in his apprehension, that any hesitancy on his part to comply might divulge his secret, and the last thing he could bear would be the forfeiture of the friendship and respect of Gordon Paston just now, when their parting must be so near.

So down he sat, with as much *sang-froid* as he could muster, and wrote a draft for fifteen hundred pounds on an account which could not boast one quarter of that amount. How it was to be swelled to that sum within the course of a week he had not the remotest idea.

On May 31st Dr. Hendon received an urgent summons from Mrs. Fairfax.

On his arrival at the house he was informed that his patient had passed a very restless night, and in the early morning had fallen into a state of unconscious-

ness. Dr. Hendon at once knew that the last stage of the disease had arrived, and that the prolongation of life was a mere question of hours. There might be a temporary return of consciousness, he said, but he could do little for him. Yes, if Mrs. Fairfax wished, he would call in again the last thing at night.

All through that day Herbert Hendon was on tenter-hooks. He knew that it was just touch-and-go whether Gordon Paston would live over the night. If he did the draft for fifteen hundred pounds would become due to him, his heirs, executors, or assigns, and he, Herbert Hendon, would be a ruined man. The anxiety was cruel. A few labored, and probably unconscious, breathings more or less meant to him immediate ruin or temporary salvation.

By the time his eight o'clock dinner was over, after which he had promised to call, Dr. Hendon had worked himself up into a high state of nervousness.

Mrs. Fairfax met him at the door.

"Yes, he is still breathing, poor fellow," she said in answer to the doctor's inquiry, "but that is all one can say. At five o'clock he regained consciousness for about half an hour."

"Did he speak at all?"

"Yes, he asked me what day of the month it was, and when I told him May 31st, he said, 'Oh, I do hope I shall live till to-morrow. That'll be the 1st of June.' He said little else, except that he had made a will, which would be found sealed up in his desk. Almost the last words he said were, 'Hendon was right and I was wrong. I should like to thank Hendon for all his kindness to me.' He said nothing else besides giving a few tender and thoughtful messages for my husband and children, whom he feared he would never see again."

Whether this meant that mention had been made of the intended gift, Hendon could not tell.

By this time they had reached the sick-chamber. The doctor saw at a glance that the end was very near.

At that moment a neighboring church clock struck the hour of ten.

The sick man stirred uneasily, and threw his arms about. Dr. Hendon took his wrist in his fingers and felt the pulse. It was scarcely perceptible. Yes; a little stimulant might fan the flickering flame into a few hours of life. Yet he hesitated. What were a few hours of unconscious life worth to him?

"I fear we can do nothing," he whispered to Mrs. Fairfax. "The end is close at hand."

"Stay with us till it is over, doctor."

Dr. Hendon bowed, and sat down by the bedside.

There was a deep silence in the room, only the clock's tick-tack could be heard, and Dr. Hendon yearned towards the sick man who lay there in his helplessness, and whom he had learned to love so well. The devil whispered, "He told you not to keep him alive when it was only pain to breathe." And the doctor settled himself down to wait. But his conscience would not let him rest. The man in him got the better of the devil.

He rose.

"I think," he whispered to Mrs. Fairfax, "we might see what a little stimulant will do for him."

At eight o'clock in the morning of June 1st, Dr. Hendon walked home through the deserted streets. But an hour before he had received a last word of thanks, a last pressure of the hand, a last loving, trustful look from the fast glazing eyes of his friend—and, as he walked alone, he thanked God that he had deserved that look of trust; that it was with an honest pressure of the hand that he had encouraged his friend across the shadowy valley. Guilty though he had been of almost criminal folly in monetary transactions, led away though he had allowed himself to be by the lust for gambling, liable though he was (as soon as legal formalities could be gone through) for £1500 to Mrs. Fairfax's boy, he yet trod the pavements with a light-heartedness which he had not felt for many a long day. He had at least proved himself a friend faithful unto death. There was at least a particle of self-respect left to him.

. . . . . .

A week later he attended his late patient's funeral, and was invited to be present at the reading of his will. The only part which in any way concerned him was as follows:—

"I give and bequeath to my dear friend and medical adviser, Herbert Hendon, the moiety of the sum of twenty thousand pounds due to me in reversion at the death of my great-aunt, Priscilla Paston, in consideration of his faithful care of me since May, 1887, and the disinterested manner in which he has prolonged a life in more ways than one a burden and oppression to him. Sanguine, as I am, that my life will by his skill be prolonged considerably over four years from that date, I will that this bequest shall not take effect in case of my death occurring *before the first day of June*, 1891."

There is nothing in the literature of the day that approaches more nearly to the shorter stories of the French writers now in vogue than the sketches of some of the younger newspaper men. They lack, perhaps, what the French call atmosphere, but they show that realistic touch, light but sure, that crispness of phrase and keen scent for types, that distinguish the writers alluded to. Both have been presented to the readers of ROMANCE, and they can judge for themselves. The following is an instance. It is by R. W. Stephens, and is republished from the *Philadelphia Press.*

TOMMY'S TOMBSTONE.

TOMMY MCGUFFY was growing old. The skin of his attenuated face was so shrunk and so stretched from wrinkle to wrinkle that it seemed narrowly to escape breaking. About the pointed chin and the cheek-bones it had the color of faded brick.

Old Tommy had become so thin that he dared not venture to the top of the hill above his native village of Rearward upon a windy day.

His knees bent comically when he walked.

For some years the villagers had been counting the nephews and nieces to whom the savings of the old retired dealer in dry goods would eventually descend.

Ten thousand dollars and a house and lot constituted a heritage worth anticipating in Rearward.

The innocent old man was not upon terms of intimacy with his prospective heirs. Having remained unmarried, his only close associates were two who had been his companions in that remote period which had been his boyhood. One of these, Jerry Hurley, was a childless widower; a very estimable and highly respected man who owned two farms. The other, like himself a bachelor, was Billy Skidmore, the sexton of the church, and therefore the regulator of the town clock upon the steeple.

There came a great shock to old Tommy one day.

As old Mrs. Sparks said, Jerry Hurley, "all suddent, like, just took a notion and died."

The wealth and standing of Jerry Hurley insured him an imposing funeral. They laid his body beside that which had once been his wife's in Rearwood cemetery. His heirs possessed his farm, and time went on—slowly, as it always does at Rearwood.

Tommy went frequently to Hurley's grave, and wondered when his heirs would erect a monument to his memory. It is necessary that your grave be marked with a monument if you would stand high in that still society that holds eternal assembly beneath the pines and willows where only the breezes speak, and they in subdued voices.

Years passed, and the grave of Tommy's old friend, Jerry, remained unmarked. Jerry's relatives had postponed the duty so long that they had grown callous to public opinion. Besides, they had other purposes to which to apply Jerry's money. It was easy enough to avoid reproach; they had only to refrain from visiting the graveyard.

"Jerry never deserved such treatment," Tommy would say to Billy, the sexton, as the two met to talk it over every sunny afternoon.

"It's an outrage, that's what it is!" Billy would reply for the hundredth time.

It was, in their eyes, an omission almost equal to that of baptism or the funeral service.

One day as Tommy was aiding himself along the main street of Rearward by means of a hickory stick, a frightful thought came to him. He turned cold.

What if his own heirs should neglect to mark his own grave?

"I'll hurry home and put the money for it aside in a stocking-foot at once," thought Tommy, and his knees bent more than usual as he accelerated his pace.

But as he tied a knot in the stocking came the fear that even this money might be misapplied; even his will might be ignored through repeated postponement and the law's indifference.

Who, save old Billy Skidmore, would care whether old Tommy McGuffy's last resting-place were designated or not? Once let the worms begin operations upon this antique morsel, what would it matter to Rearward folks where the banquet was taking place?

Tommy now underwent a second attack of horror, from which he came victorious, a gleeful smile momentarily lifting the dimness from his excessively lachrymal eyes.

"I'll fix 'em," he said to himself. "I'll go to-day to Ricketts, the marble-cutter, and order my own tombstone."

Three months thereafter Ricketts, the marble cutter, untied the knot in the stocking that had been Tommy's and deposited the contents in the local savings-bank.

In the cemetery stood a new monument, very lofty and elaborate. Around it was an iron fence. Within the enclosure there was no grave as yet.

"Here," said the monument, in deep-cut letters but bad English, "lies all that remains of Thomas McGuffy, born in Rearward, Nov. 11, 1820; died——. Gone whither the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest."

This supplementary information was framed in the words of Tommy's favorite passage in his favorite hymn. His liking for this was mainly on account of its tune.

He had left the date of his death to be inserted by the marble-cutter after its occurrence.

Rearward folks were amused at sight of the monument, and they ascribed the placing of it there to the eccentricity of a taciturn old man.

Tommy seemed to derive much pleasure from visiting his tombstone upon mild days. He spent many hours contemplating it. He would enter the iron enclosure lock the gate after him, and sit upon the ground that was intended some day to cover his body.

He was a familiar sight to people riding or walking past the graveyard—this thin old man leaning upon his cane, contentedly pondering over the inscription upon his own tombstone.

He undoubtedly found much innocent pleasure in this.

One afternoon, as he was so engaged, he was assailed by a new apprehension.

Suppose that Ricketts, the marble-cutter, should fail to inscribe the date of his death in the space left vacant for it!

There was almost no likelihood of such an omission, but there was at least a possibility of it.

He glanced across the cemetery toward Jerry Hurley's unmarked mound and shuddered.

Then he thought laboriously.

When he left the cemetery in such time as to avoid a delay of his evening meal and a consequent outburst of anger on the part of his old housekeeper, he had taken a resolution.

"Three-score years and ten, says the Bible," he muttered to himself as he walked homeward. "The scriptural lifetime'll do for me."

A week thereafter old Tommy gazed proudly upon the finished inscription.

"Died Nov. 11, 1890," was the newest bit of biography there engraved.

"But it's two years and more till Nov. 11, 1890," said a voice at his side.

Tommy merely cast an indifferent look upon the speaker and walked off without a word.

The whole village now thought that Tommy had become a monomaniac upon the subject of his tombstone. Perhaps he had.

No one has been able to learn from his friend, Billy Skidmore, what thoughts he may have communicated to the latter upon the matter.

Tommy now lived for no other apparent purpose than to visit his tombstone daily. He no longer confined his walks thither to the pleasant days. He went in weather the most perilous to so old and frail a man.

One of his prospective heirs took sufficient interest in him to advise more care of his health.

"I can easily keep alive till the time comes," returned the antique. "There's only a year left."

Rapidly his hold upon life relaxed.

A week before Nov. 11, 1890, he went to bed and stayed there. People began to speculate as to whether his unique prediction—or, I should say, his decree—would be fulfilled to the very day.

Upon the fifth day of his illness, Death threatened to come before the time that had been set for receiving him.

"Isn't this the 10th?" the old man mumbled.

"No," said his housekeeper, who, with one of his nieces, the doctor, and Billy Skidmore, attended the ill man, "it's only the 9th."

"Then I must fight for two days more. The tombstone must not lie."

And he rallied so well that it seemed as if the tombstone would lie, nevertheless, for old Tommy was still alive at 11:30 on the night of Nov. 11. Moreover, he had been in his senses when last awake, and there was every likelihood that he would look at the clock whenever his eyes should next open.

"He can't live till morning, that's sure," said the doctor.

"But, good Lord! you don't mean to say he'll hold out till after twelve o'clock," said Billy Skidmore, whose anxiety only had sustained him in his grief at the approaching dissolution of his friend.

"Quite probably," replied the doctor.

"Good heavens! Tommy wont rest easy in his grave if he doesn't die on the 11th. The monument would be wrong."

"Oh, that wont matter," said the niece.

Billy looked at her in amazement. Was his old friend's sacred wish to miscarry thus?

"Yes, 'twill matter," he said in a loud whisper. "And if time wont wait for Tommy of its own accord, we'll make it. When did he last see the clock?"

"Half-past nine," said the housekeeper.

"Then we'll turn it back to ten," said Skidmore, acting as he spoke.

"But he may hear the town clock strike."

Billy said never a word, but plunged into his overcoat, threw on his hat, and hurried out into the cold night.

"Ten minutes to midnight," he said, as he looked up at the town clock upon the church steeple. "Can I skin up them ladders in time?"

. . . . . .

Tommy awoke once before the last slumber. Billy was by his bedside, as were the doctor, the housekeeper and the niece. The old man's eyes sought the clock.

"Eleven," he murmured. Then he was silent, for the town clock had begun to clang. He counted the strokes—eleven. Then he smiled and tried to speak again.

"Almost —— live out —— birthday —— seventy —— tombstone——all right."

He closed his eyes, and, inasmuch as the town clock furnishes the official time for Rearward, the published report of Tommy McGuffy's going records that he passed at twenty-five minutes after 11 P. M., Nov. 11, 1890.

Very few people knew that time turned back one hour and a half in order that the reputation of Tommy McGuffy's tombstone for veracity might be spotless in the eyes of future generations.

Billy Skidmore, the sexton, arranged to have Rearward time ready for the sun when it rose upon the following morning.